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HISTORY
OF
THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN.

FROM
THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS AND JOURNALS
OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY OFFICERS EMPLOYED IN AFGHANISTAN
THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF BRITISH CONNEXION
WITH THAT COUNTRY.

BY JOHN WILLIAM KAYE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1851.

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Acc. No.	93565
Class. No.	958.1
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DEDICATION.

IF PUBLIC CLAIMS ALONE WERE TO BE REGARDED, I KNOW NOT
TO WHOM I COULD MORE FITLY INSCRIBE THESE VOLUMES,
THAN TO THE OFFICERS OF A REGIMENT, ON THE ROLLS OF
WHICH ARE THE NAMES OF POLLOCK, MACGREGOR, TODD,
SHAKESPEAR, LAWRENCE, ABBOTT, ANDERSON, AND OTHERS,
DISTINGUISHED IN THE ANNALS OF THE AFGHAN WAR; BUT
IT IS IN GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION OF SOME OF THE HAPPIEST
YEARS OF MY LIFE THAT I DEDICATE THESE VOLUMES TO THE
OFFICERS OF THE BENGAL ARTILLERY.

BLETCHINGLEY,
Oct. 30, 1851

P R E F A C E.

CIRCUMSTANCES having placed at my disposal a number of very interesting and important letters and papers, illustrative of the History of the War in Afghanistan, I undertook to write this Work. There was nothing that peculiarly qualified me for the task, beyond the fact that I enjoyed the confidence of some of the chief actors in the events to be narrated, or—for death had been busy among those actors—their surviving relatives and friends. I had been in India, it is true, during the entire period of the War; but I never took even the humblest part in its stirring scenes, or visited the country in which they were enacted.

It was not, therefore, until I considered that no more competent party might be disposed to undertake the Work—that the materials placed in my hands might not in the same number and variety be placed in the hands of any other writer—and that those best qualified by a full knowledge of the subject to write the History of

the War, were restrained by the obligations of official position from that fulness of revelation and freedom of discussion, which a work of this kind demands—that I entered upon the perilous undertaking. The necessities of the subject have rendered the task peculiarly painful, and, but for the encouragement I have received in the progress of its execution, alike from strangers and from friends who have freely placed new materials in my hands, and expressed a lively interest in my labours, I might have shrunk from its completion. I now lay before the public the result of much anxious thought and laborious investigation, confident that, although the Work might have been done more ably, it could hardly have been performed more conscientiously, by another.

I have been walking, as it were, with a torch in my hand over a floor strewn thickly with gunpowder. There is the chance of an explosion at every step. I have been treading all along on dangerous ground. But if I cannot confidently state that I have asserted nothing which I cannot prove, I can declare my belief that, except upon what I had a right to consider as good and sufficient authority, I have advanced absolutely nothing. It will be seen how careful I have been to quote my authorities. Indeed, I have an uneasy misgiving in my mind that I have overburdened my Work with quotations from the letters and documents in my possession. But this has been done with design and deliberation. It was not sufficient to refer to these letters and documents, for they were singly accessible only to a few, and collectively, perhaps, to no one but myself. They have, therefore, been left to speak for themselves. What the Work

has lost by this mode of treatment in compactness and continuity, it has gained in trustworthiness and authenticity. If the narrative be less animated, the history is more genuine. I have had to deal with unpublished materials, and to treat of very strange events; and I have not thought it sufficient to fuse these materials into my text, and to leave the reader to fix or not to fix his faith upon the unsupported assertions of an unknown writer.

I would make another observation regarding the execution of this Work. The more notorious events of the War, which stand fully revealed in military despatches and published blue-books, have not been elaborated with the care, and expanded into the amplitude, which their importance may seem to demand. These Volumes may be thought, perhaps, rather deficient in respect of military details. Compelled to condense somewhere, I have purposely abstained from enlarging upon those events, which have already found fitting chroniclers. The military memoir-writers, each one on his own limited field, have arranged before us all the strategical operations of the Campaign from the assemblage of Fane's army in 1838, to the return of Pollock's at the close of 1842; but the political history of the War has never been written. For information on many points of military interest, not sufficiently dwelt upon in these volumes, I would therefore refer the reader to the works of Havelock, Hough, Barr, Eyre, Stacy, Neill, and other soldierly writers. The progress of events in Upper Sindh after the capture of **Khelat**, I have not attempted to narrate. The military opera-

tions in that part of the country have found an intelligent annalist in Dr. Buist.

I need only now, after gratefully acknowledging my obligations to all who have aided me with original papers, or with information otherwise conveyed (and I have largely taxed the patience of many during the progress of this work), offer one more word of apology. I know that my scholarly Oriental friends will revolt against my spelling of Oriental names. I have only to bow beneath their correcting hand, and fling myself upon their mercy. I have written all the names in the old and vulgar manner, most familiar to the English eye, and in pronunciation to the English ear; and I believe that the majority of readers will thank me for the barbarism.

Bletchingley, October, 1851.

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ERRATA IN VOL. I.

Page 128, line 15, for "Seigtan," read "Scistan."

,, 131, line 5, for "as if though," read "as though."

,, 378, note, for "Sale and Denniss," read "Sale and *Dennie*."

THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN.

BOOK I.—INTRODUCTION.

[1800—1837.]

CHAPTER I.

[1800—1801.]

Shah Zemaun and the Douranee Empire—Threatened Afghan Invasion—
Malcolm's First Mission to Persia—Country and People of Afghanistan—
Fall of Zemaun Shah.

AT the dawn of the present century, Zemaun Shah reigned over the Douranee Empire. The son of Timour Shah, and the grandson of the illustrious Ahmed Shah, he had sought, on the death of his father, the dangerous privilege of ruling a divided and tumultuous people. Attaining by intrigue and violence what did not rightfully descend to him by inheritance, he soon began to turn his thoughts towards foreign conquest, and to meditate the invasion of Hindostan. His talents were not equal to his ambition, and his success fell far short of the magnitude of his designs. There was too little security at home to ensure for him prosperity abroad. And so it happened, that he was continually marching an army upon the frontier, eager to extend the Douranee Empire to the banks of the Ganges; and continually retracing

his steps in alarm, lest his own sovereignty should be wrested from him in his absence. For many years Zemaun Shah's descent upon Hindostan kept the British Indian Empire in a chronic state of unrest. But he never advanced further than Lahore, and then was compelled precipitately to retire. Starvation threatened his troops; a brotherly usurper his throne; and he hastened back lest he should find Prince Mahmoud reigning at Caubul in his stead.

This was in 1797,* when Sir John Shore was Governor-General of India. We smile now at the alarm that was created along the whole line of country from the Attock to the Hooghly, by the rumored approach of this formidable invader. But half a century ago, the English in India knew little of the resources of the Dourance Empire, of the national characteristics of the people, of the continually unsettled state of their political relations, or of the incompetency of the monarch himself to conduct any great enterprise. Distance and ignorance magnified the danger; but the apprehensions, which were then entertained, were not wholly groundless apprehensions. All the enemies of the British Empire in India had turned their eyes with malicious expectancy upon Caubul. Out of the rocky defiles of that romantic country were to stream the deliverers of Islamism from the yoke of the usurping Franks. The blood of the Mahomedan princes of India was at fever heat. From northern Oude and from southern Mysore had gone forth invitations to the Afghan monarch. With large promises of aid, in money and in men, Vizier Ali and Tippoo Sultan had encouraged him to move

* And again in the cold weather of 1798-99 he advanced as far as Lahore, but was recalled by the invasion of Khorassan by the Persian troops. Lord Wellesley had by this time succeeded to the government of India. The danger was then considered sufficiently cogent to call for an augmentation of the native army.

down upon Hindostan at the head of an army of true believers. Others, with whom he could claim no community of creed, extended to him the hand of fellowship. The Rajah of Jyneghur offered him a lakh of rupees a day as soon as the grand army should enter his district.* We, who in these times trustingly contemplate the settled tranquillity of the north-western provinces of India, and remember Zemaun Shah only as the old blind pensioner of Loodhianah, can hardly estimate aright the real importance of the threatened movement, or appreciate the apprehensions which were felt by two governors-general of such different personal characters as Sir John Shore and Lord Wellesley.†

The new century had scarcely dawned upon the English in India, when the perils which seemed to threaten them from beyond the Indus began to assume a more complicated and perplexing character. The ambition of a semi-barbarous monarch and the inflammatory zeal of hordes of Mussulman fanatics, were sources of danger, which, however alarming, were at least plain and intelligible. But when it was suspected that there was intrigue of a more remote and insidious character to be combated—when intelligence, only too credible, of the active efforts of French diplomacy in Persia, reached the Calcutta Council-Chamber, and it was believed that

* I find this fact stated, among other answers to queries put in 1800-1 by Captain Malcolm to Mahomed Sadik, in an interesting manuscript document forwarded to government by that officer.

† Of the two, perhaps, Lord Wellesley regarded the movements of the Douranee monarch with the livelier concern. Sir John Shore wrote: "Report speaks of an invasion of Hindostan by Zemaun Shah, and with respect to his intention is entitled to credit. . . .

The execution of his intentions will be hazardous unless he can obtain the co-operation of the Sikhs and hostages for the continuance of it; and I have great doubt as to his success." Lord Wellesley, two or three years later, spoke of the threatened invasion "creating the liveliest sensation throughout India;" and added, "Every Mahomedan, even in the remotest region of the Deccan, waited with anxious expectation for the advance of the champion of Islam."

the emissaries of Napoleon were endeavouring to cement alliances hostile to Great Britain in every quarter of the Eastern world, the position of affairs in Central Asia was regarded with increased anxiety, and their management demanded greater wisdom and address. It was now no longer a question of mere military defence against the inroads of a single invader. The repeated failures of Zemaun Shah had, in some degree, mitigated the alarm with which his movements were dimly traced in Hindostan. The Douranee monarch lost something of his importance as an independent enemy; but as the willing agent of a hostile confederacy, he appeared a more formidable opponent, and might have become a more successful one. An offensive alliance between France, Persia, and Caubul, might have rendered the dangers, which once only seemed to threaten us from the North-west, at once real and imminent. To secure the friendship of Persia, therefore, was the great aim of the British Government. It was obvious that, whilst threatened with invasion from the West, Zemaun Shah could never conduct to a successful issue an expedition against Hindostan; and that so long as Persia remained true to Great Britain, there was nothing to be apprehended from French intrigue in the countries of Central Asia. It was determined, therefore, to despatch a mission to the Court of the Persian Shah, and Captain Malcolm was selected to conduct it.

The choice could not have fallen on a fitter agent. In the fullest vigour of life, a young man, but not a young soldier, for, born in that year of heroes which witnessed the nativity of Wellington, of Napoleon, and of Mehemet Ali, he had entered the service of the Company at the early age of thirteen, Captain Malcolm brought to the difficult and responsible duties entrusted to him, extraordinary energy of mind and activity of body—talents

of the most available and useful character—some experience of native courts and acquaintance with the Oriental languages.* He had been successively military secretary to the commander-in-chief of Madras, town-major of Fort St. George, assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad, and commandant of the infantry of the Nizam's contingent. When that army took the field in Mysore, and shared in the operations against Tippoo Sultan, Captain Malcolm accompanied it in the capacity of political agent, which was virtually the chief command of the force; and, after the reduction of Seringapatam and the death of Tippoo, was associated with General Wellesley, Colonel Close, and Captain Munro,† in the commission that was then appointed for the settlement of the Mysore country. This was in 1799.

In that same year he was selected by Lord Wellesley to fill the post of envoy to the Court of Persia. With such address had he acquitted himself in all his antecedent appointments; so great had been the knowledge of native character, the diplomatic tact, and the sound understanding he had evinced in all his negotiations; that at an age when the greater number of his contemporaries were in the discharge of no higher duties than those entailed by the command of a company of sepoy, Captain Malcolm was on his way to the presence of the great defender of Islamism, charged with one of the most important missions that has ever been despatched by the British-Indian Government to the Court of a native potentate.

The mission, says Captain Malcolm, was "completely successful;" and they who do not trouble themselves to

* This must be taken, however, with some limitation. At this time, according to Malcolm's own account, his knowledge of Persian was not very extensive or profound. He wrote from Shiraz that he had had so little time to study the language, that he had

made but slight progress in it, although he had somewhat improved his Hindostanee pronunciation.

† Men who lived to occupy a space in history, as the Duke of Wellington, Sir Barry Close, and Sir Thomas Munro.

inquire too nicely into the relations of cause and effect, may accept this assertion of its success. But the fact is, that time and circumstance did more for us than diplomacy. It was the ostensible object of Captain Malcolm's mission to instigate the Shah of Persia to move an army upon Herat, and so to withdraw Shah Zemaun from his threatened invasion of Hindostan. But the move, which was to do so much for our security in India, had been made before the British ambassador appeared at the Persian Court; and the work, which was thus commenced by Futtch Ali, was completed by Prince Mahmoud.* "You may rest assured," wrote Captain Malcolm, from Ispahan, in October, 1800, "that Zemaun Shah can do nothing in India before the setting in of the rains of 1801. He has not time, even if he had the power for such an attempt; and by the blessing of God he will for some years to come be too much engaged in this quarter to think of any other."† But some years to come of empire he was not destined to see. Even as

* A writer in the *Calcutta Review*, who betrays an acquaintance with his subject such as could only have been acquired in the countries of which he writes, or by the examination of an immense mass of contemporary records, justly observes: "That the storm was dissipated in the manner suggested by Lord Wellesley was creditable to his lordship's foresight, but was entirely independent of his measures. The second expedition of Futtch Ali Khan into Khorassan in 1800, which drew Shah Zemaun from Candahar to Herat, took place almost simultaneously with Captain Malcolm's journey from the south of Persia to the capital. His majesty received the British mission at Subzwar; and the subsequent proceedings of Shah Mahmood, which led, in the sequel, to his dethronement, so far from originating in British instigation or in Persian support, were in reality in-

debted for their success to their entire independence of all foreign aid. As the minion of Persia, Shah Mahmood could never have prevailed against his elder brother. As the popular Dourance champion he was irresistible."—[*Calcutta Review*, vol. xii.] Malcolm was at Shiraz in June, 1800, when he received intelligence of the Shah's successes in Khorassan. "I have sent," he wrote, "the firman of the king, giving an account of his successful progress in Khorassan, which came yesterday (June 27, 1800), that I may peruse it. My doing so will be taken as a compliment. I shall have to give a handsome present to the Persian that brings and reads it: but I shall be able correctly to ascertain its results."—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm.*]

† *MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm.*

Malcolm wrote, the days of his sovereignty were numbered, and the bugbear of Afghan invasion was passing into tradition.

But neither Lord Wellesley nor Captain Malcolm thought only of an Afghan invasion. Their excited imaginations beheld clearly the French in the distance; and when it became the duty of the diplomatist to weave into the shape of a treaty the defensive policy of the British-Indian Government, it was at once apparent that apprehensions of French intrigue and French hostility were paramount in the minds alike of the Governor-General and his representative. It would have been sound policy to conceal these apprehensions. Instead of this, we declared them to the world; and from that time it stood revealed to all nations, by our own showing, that we looked upon Persia and Afghanistan as the high-road from Europe to the heart of our Indian Empire. The terms proposed by Captain Malcolm were acceded to with but little reluctance by the Persian Court. The envoy was empowered either to offer a subsidy of from three to four lakhs of rupees for a term of three years, or by a liberal distribution of presents to the king and his principal ministers, to bribe them into acquiescence. Malcolm chose the latter course. He threw about his largesses with an unstinting hand, and everything went smoothly with him. The name of England became great in Iran; and in the breasts of the highest and the lowest a fever of cupidity was raised, of which every subsequent mention of an English mission brought back a serious relapse.

The farther Malcolm advanced into the interior, the greater was the attention shown to the Mission, for the greater was the renown of the liberality of the Christian *Elchee*. Every difficulty melted away beneath the

magic touch of British gold.* There had been at the outset some trifling disputes about formalities—about titles and designations—but these were soon cleared away; and the serious business of the Mission proceeded in the midst of feasts and formalities to a satisfactory completion. Of all the terms proposed by Captain Malcolm, but one was demurred to by the Persian Court. “And that even,” writing some years afterwards, he says, “was not rejected. It was referred for future settlement through the agency of Hadjee Khalil Khan, who was appointed ambassador on the part of the Persian Government to India.”† This proposal related to the cession of the island of Kishm in the Persian Gulf, on the necessity of which Malcolm wrote a gigantic state-paper, and never ceased to expatiate so long as he had a hand in the game of Persian diplomacy. But other able men then and since have scouted this favourite idea of a settlement in the Persian Gulf as a defence against European encroachments; and shown, by undeniable geographical demonstration, the shadowy nature alike of the danger and the defence.

In February, 1801, Captain Malcolm reported that he had accomplished the object of his mission, and brought his labours to a close. “Whether with credit or not,” he added in a private letter, “it is the province of my superiors to judge. I can only say, in self-defence, that I have done as much as I was able; and no man can do

* But before Malcolm left Shiraz he began to have some misgivings on the score of his lavish expenditure. “I trust I will not disappoint your hopes,” he writes from that place, under date July 26, 1800, “but the expense I have incurred is heavy, and it is on that score alone I am alarmed. Not that it is one farthing more than I have to the best of my judgment

thought necessary to answer, or rather further, the ends of my mission, and to support the dignity of the British Government; but people sometimes differ in their opinions on such points. However, ‘All’s well that ends well,’ as the man called his play.”—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm.*]

† Brigadier-General Malcolm to Lord Minto, October, 1810.

more. I am far from admiring my own work, or considering it (as termed in one of the preambles) *a beautiful image in the mirror of perpetuity*. It is, on the contrary, I know, a very incorrect performance; and I can hope it to meet with a favourable consideration only on the grounds of the difficulties I had to encounter in a first negotiation with a government not two stages removed from a state of barbarism.*

The treaty, indeed, called for apology; but not on the grounds indicated in this deprecatory letter. It stipulated that if ever again the Douranee monarch should be induced to attempt the invasion of Hindostan, the King of Persia should be bound to lay waste, with a great army, the country of the Afghans; and conclude no peace with its ruler that was not accompanied with a solemn engagement to abstain from all aggressions upon the English. But it was remarkable chiefly for the bitterness with which it proscribed the French. "Should an army of the French nation," it stated, "attempt to settle, with a view of establishing themselves on any of the islands or shores of Persia, a conjoint force shall be appointed by the two high contracting parties to act in co-operation for their expulsion and extirpation, and to destroy and put an end to the foundation of their treason; and if any of the great men of the French nation express a wish or desire to obtain a place of residence or dwelling in any of the islands or shores of the kingdom of Persia, that they may.

* *MS. Correspondence.*—In another letter Malcolm says: "Had I to do with men of sense and moderation I should not fear, but I have to deal with a race that are possessed of neither." The necessity of adopting in all his negotiations the most flowery language, somewhat puzzled him at first; but in time he fell into the right vein of discourse. On one occasion,

wishing to demonstrate the advantages of simplicity of style, he produced a copy of an Indian treaty, when the Meerza, after reading two articles of it, declared that he would "give in his resignation to his sovereign rather than that such a document should be copied into the records of the office over which he presided."

raise the standard of abode or settlement, leave for their residing in such a place shall not be granted." Nor was this all. The British envoy succeeded in persuading the Shah to issue a firman of a still more vindictive character. In this document the king exhorted his provincial governors to "expel and extirpate the French, and never allow them to obtain a footing in any place;" adding, "you are at full liberty to disgrace and slay the intruders." These proceedings have been severely censured by French writers, and even English politicians have declared them to be "an eternal disgrace to our Indian diplomacy." But those were days when, even in India, men's minds were unhinged and unsettled, and their ideas of right and wrong confounded by the monstrosities of the French revolution. Revolutionary Frenchmen were looked upon as animals to be slain and exterminated with as little ceremony and as little compunction as venomous reptiles or savage beasts. It was conceived that there was a great and pressing danger, and Captain Malcolm was sent to combat it; but it may be questioned whether the information which the mission brought back was not all the benefit resulting from the movement. The treaty was never formally ratified; and the Persian Court practically ignored its obligations as soon as it was no longer convenient to observe them.

Before the mission of Captain Malcolm to the West, but little was known in India, and nothing in Great Britain, about the Douranee Empire, the nature and extent of its resources, the quality of its soldiers, and the character of its ruler. The information which that officer acquired was not of a very alarming description. The Douranee Empire, which has since been shorn of some of its fairest provinces, then consisted of Afghanistan, part of Khorassan, Cashmere, and the Derajat. The Sikh nation had

not then acquired the strength which a few years later enabled it, under the military directorship of Runjeet Singh, to curb the pretensions and to mutilate the empire of its dominant neighbour. That empire extended from Herat in the west, to Cashmere in the east; from northern Balkh to southern Shikarpoor. Bounded on the north and east by immense mountain ranges, and on the south and west by vast tracts of sandy desert, it opposed to external hostility natural defences of a formidable character. The general aspect of the country was wild and forbidding; in the imagination of the people haunted with ghouls and genii; but not unvaried by spots of gentler beauty in the valleys and on the plains, where the fields were smiling with cultivation, and the husbandman might be seen busy at his work.

Few and far between as were the towns, the kingdom was thinly populated. The people were a race—or a group of races—of hardy, vigorous mountaineers. The physical character of the country had stamped itself on the moral conformation of its inhabitants. Brave, independent, but of a turbulent vindictive character, their very existence seemed to depend upon a constant succession of internal feuds. The wisest among them would probably have shaken their heads in negation of the adage—"Happy the country whose annals are a blank." They knew no happiness in anything but strife. It was their delight to live in a state of chronic warfare. Among such a people civil war has a natural tendency to perpetuate itself. Blood is always crying aloud for blood. Revenge was a virtue among them; the heritage of retribution passed from father to son; and murder became a solemn duty. Living under a dry, clear, bracing climate, but one subject to considerable alternations of heat and cold, the people were strong and active; and as navigable rivers were wanting, and the precipitous nature of the country forbade the use of

wheeled carriages, they were for the most part good horsemen, and lived much in the saddle. Early trained to the use of arms, compelled constantly to wear and often to use them in the ordinary intercourse of life, every man was more or less a soldier or a bandit. Their very shepherds were men of strife. The pastoral and the predatory character were strangely blended; and the tented cantonments of the sheep-drivers often bristled into camps of war.

But there was a brighter side to the picture. Of a cheerful, lively disposition, seemingly but little in accordance with the outward gravity of their long beards and sober garments, they might be seen in their villages, at evening tide, playing or dancing like children in their village squares; or, assembling in the Fakir's gardens, to smoke and talk, retailing the news gathered in the shops, reciting stories, and singing their simple Afghan ballads, often expressive of that tender passion which, among them alone of all Oriental nations, is worthy of the name of love. Hospitable and generous, they entertained the stranger without stint, and even his deadliest enemy was safe beneath the Afghan's roof. There was a simple courtesy in their manner which contrasted favourably with the polished insincerity of the Persians on one side, and the arrogant ferocity of the Rohillas on the other. Judged by the strict standard of a Christian people, they were not truthful in word or honest in deed, but, side by side with other Asiatic nations, their truthfulness and honesty were conspicuous. Kindly and considerate to their immediate dependents, the higher classes were followed with loyal zeal and served with devoted fidelity by the lower; and, perhaps, in no eastern country was less of tyranny exercised over either the slaves of the household or the inmates of the zenana. Unlettered were they, but not incurious; and although their more polished brethren of Persia looked upon them as the

Bæotians of Central Asia, their Spartan simplicity and manliness more than compensated for the absence of the Attic wit and eloquence of their western neighbours.

Soldiers, husbandmen, and shepherds, they were described as the very antithesis of a nation of shopkeepers. The vocation of the tradesman they despised. To Tajiks, Hindoos, and other aliens, was the business of selling entrusted, except upon that large scale which entitled the dealer to be regarded as a merchant, and generally entailed upon him the necessities of a wandering and adventurous life. The principal commerce of the country was with the Persian and Russian states. In the bazaars of Herat, Candahar, and Caubul the manufactures of Ispahan, Yezd, and Cashan, the spices of India, and the broad-cloths of Russia, brought by Astrakan and Bokhara, found a ready market. Occasionally, when the settled state of the country gave encouragement to commercial enterprise, an adventurous merchant would make his way, through Dera from Bombay, with a cafila of British goods, for the scarlet cloths of England were in especial demand to deck the persons of the body servants of the king. The indigenous products of the country were few, but important; for the rich shawls of Cashmere and the gaudy chintzes of Mooltan, exported in large quantities, were in good repute all over the civilised world.* At Herat some velvets and taffetas of good quality were manufactured, but only for internal consumption; whilst the assafoetida of that place, the madder of Candahar, and the indigo of the Derajat,†

* There was a considerable trade in horses; but rather through than from Afghanistan. The animals were brought from Balkh and Toorkistan, fattened at Caubul, and sold in India.

† "Five or six cafilas of this indigo leave the Derajat annually,

which on an average consist of seven hundred camels, each carrying eighty Tabrizee maunds. These come into Persia by the route of Candahar and Herat."—[*Mahomed Sadik's Answers to Captain Malcolm*, 1800-1 (MS.).]

found a market in the Persian cities, and the dried fruits of the country were in request in all neighbouring parts. These, a few other drugs of little note, and some iron from the Hindoo Koosh and the Solimancee range, formed the main staple of Afghan commerce. Between the large towns there was a constant interchange of commodities; and long cafilas, or caravans, were ever in motion, from east to west, and from north to south, toiling across the sandy plains or struggling through the precipitous defiles, exposed to the attacks of predatory tribes, who levied their contributions often not without strife and bloodshed.

Such was the not very flattering picture of the commercial wealth of the Douranee Empire, which was painted by Captain Malcolm's informants. Nor was the military strength of the Empire set forth in any more striking colours. Distance and ignorance had vastly magnified the true proportions of that famous military power, which was to have overrun Hindostan, and driven the white men into the sea. The main strength of the Afghan army was in the Douranee horse. The Douranee tribes had been settled in Western Afghanistan by Nadir Shah. He had first conquered, then taken them into his service, and then parcelled out amongst them, as his military dependents, the lands which had before been held by a motley race of native cultivators. It was the policy of Ahmed Shah and his successors—a policy which was subsequently reversed by the Barukzyc sirdars—to aggrandise and elevate these powerful tribes, by heaping upon them privileges and immunities at the expense of their less favoured countrymen. Upon the misery and humiliation of others, the Douranee tribes thrived and flourished. The chief offices of the state were divided amongst them; they held their lands exempt from taxation. The only demand made upon them, in

return for the privileges they enjoyed, was that they should furnish a certain contingent of troops.* It was said to be the principle of the military tenure by which they held their lands, that for every plough used in cultivation† they should contribute a horseman for the service of the state. But it does not appear that the integrity of this system was long preserved. In a little time there ceased to be any just proportion between the ploughs and the horsemen; and it became difficult to account for the arbitrary manner in which each of the different Douranee clans furnished its respective quota of troops.‡

In the time of Ahmed Shah the Douranee horsemen mustered about 6000 strong. The other western tribes and the Persian stipendiaries together reached about the same number. In the reign of Timour Shah, the army was computed at some 40,000 soldiers, almost entirely horsemen;§

* And even this obligation ceased to be recognised by Ahmed Shah, who paid the Douranee horsemen for their services, alleging that their lands had been bestowed upon them as a free and unencumbered gift. In Zemaun Shah's time they held pay-certificates, available when they were called out on active service, and realised, if they could, the amount due to them by means of orders on Cashmere, Mooltan, and other outlying provinces.—[*MS. Records—Rawlinson and Malcolm.*]

† Or, more strictly, for every parcel of land demanding the services of a single *kulba*, or plough; from which the division of land, and the assessment founded upon it, took its name.

‡ Thus the Populzyes, who had 965 *kulbas*, furnished, in Ahmed Shah's time, 806 horsemen; the Alekozyes, with 1050 *kulbas*, gave 851; the Barukzyes, who had 1018 *kulbas*, furnished 907; and so on. I must state that I do not derive these details from Sir John Malcolm and his informants, but from Major (now Colonel) Rawlinson, who extracted them from the Candahar records when Political

Agent at that place. To an elaborate report on the revenue system of Western Afghanistan, especially as affecting the Douranee tribes, drawn up by that accomplished officer in 1842, I am indebted for much valuable information, which will be found incorporated with subsequent portions of the narrative.

§ The authority for this, according to Malcolm's informant, was the *Caul* records. The numbers set down are 12,000 Douranees, 12,000 Kuzzilbashes, 8000 Ghilzyes, 3000 Khorassanees, 3000 Beloochees, 300 Hazarehs. It is not improbable that in this computation, which is somewhat vaguely given, account is taken of the reliefs; so that, for every one horseman on service at a time, two are set down in the records. Forster, who travelled in Afghanistan in the reign of Timour Shah, says that his entire army did not exceed 30,000 men, nor his revenue a million of our money. How these men were not paid by Timour Shah, and how they contrived to pay themselves, may be gathered from a passage in Forster's *Travels*, which is worth transcribing:

but no such force had served under Zemaun Shah, and they who had seen in 1799-1800, the muster of his troops near Caubul, and had access to the returns of the muster-masters, reported that he then assembled only some ten or twelve thousand men, and all, with the exception of a few Persian stipendiaries, in the immediate service of the Wuzeer, very miserably equipped. Even the Kuzzilbashes, when Shah Zemaun took the field in 1799, refused to accompany the projected expedition, on the plea that they wanted arms to fight their battles, and money to support their wives.

Fighting men, indeed, were never wanting in Afghanistan, but money was wanting to induce them to leave their homes. It was said that Shah Zemaun might, on any great national enterprise, have led 200,000 men into the field, if he had had money to pay them. But his entire revenues were not equal to the payment of a very much smaller force. He was continually being deserted by his soldiery, at critical times, for want of the sinews of war to retain them. The emptiness of his treasury, indeed, reduced him to all kinds of shifts and expedients, such as that of raising the value of the current coin of the realm. But no devices of this character could confer upon him a really formidable army. In one important branch he was miserably deficient. The Douranee artillery consisted of some twelve brass field-pieces and five hundred zumboorucks, or camel guns. Even these were mise-

"This day a body of Afghan cavalry encamped in the environs of Akorah, and overspread the country like a swarm of locusts, devouring and destroying wherever they went. It seemed as if the land was invaded; they entered in a violent manner every village within their scope, and fed themselves and horses at the expense of the inhabitants. Such expeditions afford these hungry crea-

tures almost the only means of subsistence; for when inactive, they are often reduced to such distress by the blind parsimony of their prince, that their horses, arms, and clothes, are sold for a livelihood." The same writer, speaking generally of the Afghan army, says that he "felt a sensible disappointment at seeing it composed of a tumultuous body, without order or common discipline."

rably equipped; the camels wanted drivers, and the guns were in bad condition. It was said by one who visited the encampment of the grand army, under Zemaun Shah, in 1799-1800, that there were not above 500 good horses in camp, and that these belonged principally to the King and the Wuzeer. The men were mounted for the most part on yaboos, or ponies, few of which, at a liberal valuation, were worth a hundred rupees.

Such was the army with which Zemaun Shah meditated the invasion of Hindostan. The personal character of the monarch was not more formidable than the army which he commanded. More of a scholar than of a soldier, very strict in the observances of his religion, and an assiduous reader of the Koran, his way of life, judged by the princely standard of Central Asia, was sufficiently moral and decorous. Humane and generous, of a gentle, plastic disposition; very prone to take for granted the truth of all that was told him; by no means remarkable for personal activity, and somewhat wanting in courage, he was designed by nature for a facile puppet in the hands of a crafty Wuzeer. And such was Zemaun Shah in the expert hands of Wuffadar Khan. It was reported of him that he took no active part in the management of public affairs; and that when it was politic that he should make a show of government and appear at Durbar, what he said was little more than a public recital of a lesson well learnt in private. He was, indeed, the mere mouth-piece of the minister—of a worse and more designing man. Content with the gilded externals of majesty, he went abroad sumptuously arrayed and magnificently attended; and mighty in all the state papers of the time was the name of Zemaun Shah. But it was shrewdly suspected that, had the state of his domestic relations and the military resources at his command enabled him to

take the field, as the invader of Hindostan; a bribe any day offered to the Wuzeer might have broken up the Douranee army, and kept the invader quietly at home.

On the whole, he was a popular ruler. The cultivating classes were happy under his government. It recognised their claims to remuneration for whatever was taken from them for the service of the state, and no acts of fraud and oppression were ever committed in his name. The merchants and traders were secure under his rule. In the midst of much that was base and unworthy in the character and conduct of the minister, he had a reputation for fair dealing with these classes, and they looked up to him for protection. But far otherwise were his relations with the warlike tribes and the chief people of the empire. They were not without feelings of loyalty towards the king; but it was rather affection for his person, than satisfaction with the government of which he was the head. The grasping character of the minister, who engrossed to himself all the patronage of the state, rendered him, in spite of his courteous manners and affable demeanour, obnoxious to the principal Sirdars; and something of this disaffection began in time to be directed against the monarch himself, who had too long abandoned his own better nature to the sinister guidance of the unprincipled and unpopular Wuzeer.

Like many a monarch, abler and better than himself, Zemaun Shah had chosen his minister unwisely, and was undone by the choice. When he entrusted the affairs of his empire to the administration of Wuffadar Khan, he made the great mistake of his life. A base and designing man, without any of those commanding qualities which impart something of dignity and heroism to crime, the Wuzeer bent his sovereign, but could not bend cir-

cumstances to his will. The loyalty of the Douranee sirdars he could extinguish, but their power he could not break by his oppressions. Alarmed at their increasing influence, Wuffadar Khan sought to encompass them in the toils of destruction; but he destroyed himself and involved his sovereign in the ruin. Prince Mahmoud was in arms against his royal brother. Exasperated by the conduct of Wuffadar Khan, the Douranees threw all the weight of their influence into the scales in favour of the prince. The rebellion which they headed acquired strength and swelled into a revolution. And then began that great strife between the royal princes and the Douranee sirdars, which half a century of continued conflict, now witnessing the supremacy of the one, now of the other, has scarcely even yet extinguished.

The two principal clans or tribes of the Douranees were the Populzyes and the Barukzyes. The Suddozye, or Royal race, was one of the branches of the former. The Bamezye, in which the Wuzeership was vested, but not by inalienable right, was another branch of the same tribe. Second in influence to the Populzyes, and greater in extent, was the tribe of the Barukzyes. To this tribe belonged Futteh Khan. He was the son of Poyndah Khan, an able statesman and a gallant soldier, whose wisdom in council and experience in war had long sustained the tottering fortunes of Timour Shah. On the death of that feeble monarch he had supported the claims of Zemaïn Shah. With as little wisdom as gratitude, that prince, it has been seen, suffered himself to be cajoled by a man of less honesty and less ability, and became a tool in the hands of Wuffadar Khan. The favourite of two monarchs was disgraced; and, from a powerful friend, became the resolute enemy of the reigning family. He conspired against the King and the Wuzeer; his designs were de-

tected; and he perished miserably with his associates in the enterprise of treason.

Poyndah Khan died, leaving twenty-one sons, of whom Futteh Khan was the eldest. They are said, after the death of their father, to have stooped into a cloud of poverty and humiliation, and to have wandered about begging their bread. But their trials were only for a season. The Barukzye brothers soon emerged from the night of suffering that surrounded them. There was no power in the Douranee Empire which could successfully cope with these resolute, enterprising spirits. In Afghanistan revenge is a virtue. The sons of Poyndah Khan had the murder of their father to avenge; and they rested not till the bloody obligation had been faithfully fulfilled. Futteh Khan had fled into Persia, and there leagued himself with Prince Mahmoud. Repeated failure had not extinguished the ambition of this restless prince. The accession of the Barukzye sirdar now inspired him with new courage. Upheld by the strong arm of the "king-maker," he determined to strike another blow for the sovereignty of Caubul. With a few horsemen they entered Afghanistan, and, raising the standard of revolt, pushed on to unexpected conquest.

There were not many in Afghanistan, nor many among the disinterested lookers-on at that fraternal strife, who were inclined to jeopardise their character for sagacity by predicting the success of the prince. Everything, indeed, was against him. His treasury was always empty. His friends were not men of note. With the exception of the Barukzye sirdars,* no chiefs of influence espoused

* And even the character of Futteh Khan was at that time very little understood and appreciated. He was described to Captain Malcolm as a man of influence, but of low, dissipated habits, who spent all his time in drinking wine and in smoking bang. It should be mentioned, however, that Prince Ferooz, Mahmoud's brother, was associated in this enterprise. He became master of Herat, whilst Mahmoud pushed on to Candahar.

his cause. His followers were described to Captain Malcolm as men "of low condition and mean extraction." But in spite of the slender support which he received, and the strenuous efforts which were made to destroy him, the successes which from time to time he achieved seemed to show that there was some vitality in his cause. A divinity seemed to hedge him in, and to protect him from the knife of the assassin. He escaped as though by a miracle the snares of his enemies, and from every new deliverance seemed to gather something of prosperity and strength. It was after one of these marvellous escapes, when the weapons of the Kuzzilbashes* had fallen from their hands, palsied by the mysterious presence of the blood royal, that Candahar fell before the insurgents. With two or three thousand horsemen of the Barukzye and Achekzye tribes, Mahmoud invested the place for thirty-three days, at the end of which Futteh Khan, with a handful of resolute men, escaladed the fort near the Shikarpoor gate, and put the panic-struck garrison to flight. The Meer Akhoor, or Master of the Horse, fled for his life. The Shah-zadah Hyder sought sanctuary at the tomb of Ahmed Shah; and Prince Mahmoud became master of the place.

It is not a peculiarity of Eastern princes alone to shine with a brighter and a steadier light in the hour of adversity than in the hour of success. The trials of prosperity were too great for Prince Mahmoud, as they have been for greater men; and he soon began to lose ground at Candahar. The marvel is, that his fortunes were not utterly marred by his own folly. It was only by the concurrence of greater folly elsewhere that in this

* The Kuzzilbashes, of whom a Persian settlers in Afghanistan; many more particular account will be given of whom are retained in the military in the course of this narrative, are service of the state.

conjuncture he was saved from ruin. His impolitic and haughty conduct towards the Sirdars early demonstrated his unfitness for rule, and well-nigh precipitated the enterprise in which he was engaged into a sea of disastrous failure. There seemed, indeed, to be only one thing that could sustain him, and that one thing was wanting. He was as poor as he was unpopular. But the days of Shah Zemaun's sovereignty were numbered, and no folly on the part of his antagonist could arrest the doom that was brooding over him.

At this time Zemaun Shah was on his way towards the borders of Hindostan. He had advanced as far as Peshawur, when intelligence of the fall of Candahar reached his camp. It was believed that he had little actual design of advancing beyond the Sutlej. Partly with a view of enforcing the payment of the Sindh tribute—partly to overawe the Sikhs, and partly to abstract his own army from the dangerous vicinity of Candahar, and the corrupting influences to which in such a neighbourhood it was exposed, he had made this move to the southward. It was very obvious that in such a condition of his own empire, all idea of invading Hindostan was utterly wild and chimerical. If such an idea had ever been formed, it was now speedily abandoned. All other considerations gave place to the one necessity of saving his kingdom from the grasp of his brother. He hastened back to Western Afghanistan; but an impolitic expedition under the prince, Soojah-ool-Moolk, who was soon destined to play a conspicuous part in the great Central-Asian drama, had crippled his military resources, and when he retraced his steps he found that the strength of Prince Mahmoud had increased as his own had diminished. He marched against the rebels only to be defeated. The main body of the royal troops was under

the command of one Ahmed Khan, a chief of the Noorzye tribe. Watching his opportunity, Futteh Khan seized the person of the Sirdar's brother, and threatened to destroy him if the chief refused to come over bodily with his troops, and swell the ranks of the insurgents. The character of the Barukzye leader certified that this was no idle threat. Ahmed Khan, already wavering in his loyalty, for the conduct of the Wuzeer had alienated his heart from the royal cause, at once made his election. When the troops of Shah Zemaun came up with the advance of the rebel army, he joined the insurgent force. From that time the cause of the royalists became hopeless. Disaster followed disaster till its ruin was complete. The minister and his master fell into the hands of the enemy. Wuffadar Khan, with his brothers, was put to death. Death, too, awaited the king—but the man was suffered to live. They doomed him only to political extinction. There is a cruel, but a sure way of achieving this in all Mahomedan countries. Between a blind king and a dead king there is no political difference. The eyes of a conquered monarch are punctured with a lancet, and he *de facto* ceases to reign. They blinded Shah Zemaun, and cast him into prison; and the Douranee Empire owned Shah Mahmoud as its head.

So fell Zemaun Shah, the once dreaded Afghan monarch, whose threatened invasion of Hindostan had for years been a ghastly phantom haunting the Council-Chamber of the British-Indian Government. He survived the loss of his sight nearly half a century; and as the neglected pensioner of Loodhianah, to the very few who could remember the awe which his name once inspired, must have presented a curious spectacle of fallen greatness—an illustration of the mutability of human affairs scarcely paralleled in the history of the world. He died at last full

of years, empty of honours, his death barely worth a newspaper-record or a paragraph in a state paper. Scarcely identified in men's minds with the Zemaun Shah of the reigns of Sir John Shore and Lord Wellesley, he lived an appendage, alike in prosperity and adversity, to his younger brother, Soojah-ool-Moolk. That Soojah had once been reputed and described as an appendage to Shah Zemaun—"his constant companion at all times." They soon came to change places, and in a country where fraternal strife is the rule and not the exception, it is worthy of record that those brothers were true to each other to the last.*

* Since this passage was written, I have had reason to think that it ought to be accepted with some qualification. In October, 1840, when Dost Mahomed was flitting about the Kohistan, and the greatest anxiety prevailed among our political officers at Caubul, Shah Soojah said to Sir William Macnaghten, just as he was taking leave after an excited conference, "You know I have from the first expressed to you a mean opinion of my own countrymen. If you want further proof, look at that from my own brother." The Shah then showed Macnaghten an intercepted letter, bearing the seal of Shah Zemaun, to the address of Sultan Mahomed Barukzye, purposing that, as Shah Soojah had made over the country to the infidels, the Barukzyes

and the Sikhs united should make him (Shah Zemaun) King of Afghanistan.—[*Unpublished Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.*] This story may seem to be at variance with the statement in the preceding page,—that "between a blind king and a dead king there is no political difference;" but I am acquainted with no Mahomedan law that excludes a blind prince from the throne. The exclusion is based upon the popular assumption that blindness disqualifies a man from managing the affairs of an empire. If, however, in Mahomedan countries, there have been no exceptions to this rule—of which I am doubtful—in the regal line, it is certain that many provincial governments have been in the hands of men who have been deprived of their sight.

CHAPTER II.

[1801—1808.]

The Early Days of Soojah-ool-Moolk—Disastrous Commencement of his Career—Defeat of Shah Mahmoud—Reign of Shah Soojah—The Insurrection of Prince Kaysur—Tidings of the British Mission.

FROM the fall of Zemaun Shah we are to date the rise of Soojah-ool-Moolk. They were brothers by the same father and mother. At the time of the political extinction of the elder, the younger was about twenty years of age. He had taken no part in the government; was but lightly esteemed for courage; and had little place in the thoughts of the people, except as an appendage of the reigning monarch. In command of the royal troops, and in charge of the family and property of the king, whilst Zemaun Shah was striking a last blow for empire in the West, he had held his post at Peshawur. There he received the disastrous tidings of the fate that had descended upon his brother and his prince. He at once proclaimed himself king, began to levy troops, and in September, 1801, marched upon Caubul with an army of 10,000 men. Victorious at the outset, he did not improve his successes, and was eventually defeated by the Dourances under Futteh Khan. The destinies of princes were in the hands of the powerful Barukzye

sirdar. His energies and his influence alone upheld the drooping sovereignty of Shah Mahmoud. Weak and unprincipled, indolent and rapacious, that prince had been raised to the throne by Futteh Khan; and, though it was not in the nature of things that a ruler so feeble and so corrupt should long retain his hold of the empire, for a while the strong hand of the minister sustained him in his place.

Soojah-ool-Moolk fled to the fastnesses of the Khybur Pass. In the winter of 1801 the Ghilzyes broke out into open rebellion against the Douranee power; but were defeated with great slaughter. The Douranees returned to Caubul, and erected, from the heads of the conquered, a pyramid of human skulls. In the spring of the following year the same restless tribe was again in rebellion; and again the energies of Futteh Khan were put forth for the suppression of the dangerous spirit of Ghilzye revolt. In March, 1802, the insurgents were a second time chastised; and, it is said, on the same day, Soojah-ool-Moolk, who had raised an army in the Khybur and marched upon Peshawur, sustained a severe defeat at the hands of the Douranee garrison, and was driven back into the obscurity from which he had fruitlessly emerged.

Thus for a while was tranquillity restored to the Douranee Empire. Reading and conversing with learned men, and taking counsel with his military adherents, Soojah-ool-Moolk, from the time of his defeat, remained inactive in the Afreedi country. Even there the vigilant enmity of the Wuzeer tracked the unhappy prince. There was no security in such retirement. The shadow of Futteh Khan darkened his resting-place and disturbed his repose. He fled to Shawl; and there, in the depth of winter and on the verge of starvation, wandered about,

making vain endeavours to subsist himself and a few followers by the sale of his royal jewels. Among a people little understanding the worth of such costly articles, purchasers were with difficulty to be found. In the extremity which then beset him he changed the character of the pedlar for that of the bandit, and levied money by plundering caravans, and giving notes of hand for the amount that he raised. In this manner he collected three lakhs of rupees, and was enabled to levy troops for an attack upon Candahar. But Providence did not smile upon his endeavours. He was again repulsed. Again was he involved in a great ruin; with little hope of extrication by the energy of his own struggles, or the inherent vitality of his cause.

But in the mean while the sovereignty of Shah Mahmoud was falling to pieces by itself. He had risen upon the weakness of his predecessor, and now by his own weakness was he to be cast down. What Shah Zemaun had done for him, was he now doing for Soojah-ool-Moolk. In the absence of Futteh Khan, the Kuzzilbashs were suffered to ride roughshod over the people. The excesses which they committed at Caubul scattered the last remnant of popularity which still adhered to the person of the Shah. At last an open outbreak occurred between the Sheeas and the Soonees. The king identified himself with the former; Akrum Khan, Mooktorood-Dowlah, with the latter. In this conjuncture Soojah-ool-Moolk was sent for to strengthen the hands of Shah Mahmoud's opponents. When he arrived, he found Caubul in a state of siege. Futteh Khan had by this time returned to aid the royal cause, but too late to regain the ground that had been lost in his absence. There was an engagement, which lasted from morning to evening prayer, and at the end of which Mahmoud was defeated. Futteh Khan fled. Soojah-ool-Moolk entered Caubul in triumph; and Mahmoud threw himself at his

feet.* To him, who in the hour of victory had shown no mercy, mercy was shown in the hour of defeat. It is to the honour of Shah Soojah that he forbore to secure the future tranquillity of his empire by committing the act of cruelty which had disgraced the accession of the now prostrate Mahmoud. The eyes of the fallen prince were spared: and years of continued intestine strife declared how impolitic was the act of mercy.

For from this time, throughout many years, the strife between the royal brothers was fierce and incessant. In his son Kamran, the ex-King Mahmoud found a willing ally and an active auxiliary. To the reigning monarch it was a period of endless inquietude. His resources were limited, and his qualities were of too negative a character to render him equal to the demands of such stirring times. He wanted vigour; he wanted activity; he wanted judgment; and above all, he wanted money. It is ever the fate of those who have risen, as Soojah

* This was in July, 1803. Shah Soojah's own account of these transactions, which forms part of the autobiography written by him at Loodbi-anah in 1826-27, is contained in the following words:—"After our arrival at Kazee, we had scarcely prepared our force, when Futteh Khan's army appeared; our troops immediately were drawn up in battle array, and an attack made upon them. The battle lasted from the morning to the evening prayer, when the enemy gave way, and retreated in great disorder to the valley Advaz, and then to Kamran's camp in Candahar, where the drunkenness of the Kuzzilbash soldiery, and the ill-treatment which the Soonee doctors received, soon disgusted all our subjects, who entirely refused to give Kamran assistance. On hearing this we immediately returned to our capital. Shah Mahmoud was so disheartened by the news of our victory, that after swearing on the Koran he would not

again be guilty of treachery, he sent some of his principal attendants to request the royal pardon, which we granted; and had him conveyed from the outer to the inner fort with all due respect to his rank. We then entered the Balla Hissar with regal pomp, and seated ourselves on the throne of Caubul." Mr. Elphinstone says of this "victory," that "Futteh Khan was at first successful; he routed the party of the enemy which was immediately opposed to him, and was advancing to the city, when the desertion of a great lord to Soojah threw the whole into confusion: his own party then fell off by degrees, till he found himself almost alone, and was compelled to provide for his safety by a precipitate flight. Next morning Shah Soojah entered Caubul in triumph. Mooktor-ood-Dowlah walked on foot by the side of his horse, and many other Douranee ameers followed in his train."—[*Elphinstone's "Caubul"—Appendix.*]

rose to monarchy, to be dragged down by the weight of the obligations incurred and the promises made in the hour of adversity. The day of reckoning comes, and the dangers of success are as great as the perils of failure. The Douranee monarch could not meet his engagements without weakening himself, by making large assignments upon the revenues of different provinces; and even then many interested friends were turned by disappointment into open enemies. This was one element of weakness. But the error of his life was committed when he failed to propitiate the loyalty of the great Barukzye, Futteh Khan. Upon the accession of Shah Soojah, that chief had been freely pardoned, and "allowed to salute the step of the throne." But the king did not estimate the real value of the alliance, and, elevating his rival Akrum Khan, refused the moderate demands of the Barukzye chief. Disappointed and chagrined, Futteh Khan then deserted the royal standard. He chose his time wisely and well. The king had set out with an army to overawe Peshawur and Cashmere. When they had proceeded some way, Futteh Khan, who accompanied him, excused himself on the plea of some physical infirmity which disabled him from keeping pace with the royal cortége, and said that he would join the army, following it by easy stages. Thus, disguising his defection, he fell in the rear, and as the royal party advanced, returned to foment a rebellion.

In this distracted country there was at that time another aspirant to the throne. The son of Zemaun Shah, Prince Kaysur, had set up his claims to the sovereignty of Caubul. He had been appointed governor of Candahar by Shah Soojah; and probably would have been satisfied with this extent of power, if Futteh Khan had not incited him to revolt, and offered to aid him in his attempts upon the crown. The prince lent a willing

ear to the charmings of the Sirdar; and so it happened that whilst Shah Soojah was amusing himself on the way to Peshawur—"enjoying the beautiful scenery and the diversion of hunting,"—his nephew and the Barukzye chief were raising a large army at Candahar, intent upon establishing, by force of arms, the claims of the family of his sightless brother. 93565

This ill-omened intelligence brought the Shah back in haste to his capital, whence he soon marched towards Candahar to meet the advancing troops of the prince. And here again, to the treachery of his opponents rather than to the valour of his own troops, the Shah owed his success. On the eve of the expected conflict, the son of Ahmed Khan, with other Douranee chiefs, deserted to the royal standard. Disheartened and dismayed, the prince broke up his army, and fled to Candahar. In the mean while, Shah Soojah returned to Caubul to find it occupied by an insurgent force. According to his own confession, he was employed for a month in repossessing himself of the capital. The insurgent prince and the Barukzye chief, during this time, had in some measure recovered themselves at Candahar, and the king marched again to the westward. Kaysur fled at his approach; and Futteh Khan betook himself to Herat, to offer his services to the son of his old master. The prince was brought back and conducted to the royal presence by Shah Zemaun and the Mooktor-ood-Dowlah, who besought the forgiveness of the king on the plea of the youth and inexperience of the offender, and the evil counsel of the Barukzye sirdar. Against his better judgment, Shah Soojah forgave him, and restored him to the government of Candahar.*

* "While in Candahar," writes Prince Kaysur's pardon, as his inexperience and the advice of Futteh Shah Soojah, "we received letters from our beloved brother Shah-zadah Khan and other rebels had led him from his duty. Out of respect to our Mooktor-ood-Dowlah, requesting

The affairs of Candahar being thus settled for a time, Shah Soojah marched into Sindh to enforce the payment of tribute which had been due for some years to Caubul. He then returned to his capital, and after giving his troops a three months' furlough, began to think of commencing operations against Kamran, who was again disturbing the country to the west. In the mean while, this prince had marched upon Candahar, and Kaysur had fled at his approach. This was the second time the two princes had met as enemies—the second time that the scale had been turned by the weight of the chief of the Barukzyes. On one occasion, Futteh Khan had invited Kamran to Candahar, and engaged to deliver up the city—then suddenly formed an alliance with Kaysur, and, sword in hand at the head of a small body of Douranees, driven back the prince with whom he had just before been in close alliance. Now he forsook the son of Shah Zemaun to unite himself with the heir of Mahmoud. Forgetful of past treachery, Kamran received the powerful Barukzye; and they marched together upon Candahar. Kaysur, as I have said, fled at his approach; and the insurgents took possession of the city. In the mean while, the Persians were advancing upon Herat, and Shah Soojah was moving up to Candahar. In this criti-

brother, we agreed to this. Prince Kaysur being in Dehleh, Shah Zemaun and Mooktor-ood-Dowlah went there and brought him into the presence. Shah Zemaun then requested that we would give him Candahar once more, and became security for his good behaviour in future. We agreed to this in spite of our good judgment." It was whilst still engaged with the settlement of affairs at Candahar, not after their complete adjustment, and Soojah's subsequent expedition to Sindh (as stated by Mr. Elphinstone), that ambassadors arrived from Bokhara to negotiate a marriage between the Khan's daughter

and the Shah. "A suitable answer," says the Shah, "being given to the royal letter, and dresses of honour being given to the ambassadors, we dismissed them with gifts. *Our thoughts were then directed to the state of Candahar.*" The point is of little importance in Afghan history; and only worth noticing in illustration of the difficulty of determining with precision the dates of different events, and the order in which they occurred. No two narratives altogether agree—but except where Shah Soojah speaks of his "victories," we may regard him as a tolerably good authority in all that relates to himself.

cal conjuncture, Kamran returned in alarm to the former place, and Kaysur joined the king at the latter. "We again," says Shah Soojah, "gave him charge of Candahar, at the request of our queen-mother, and our brother, Shah Zemaun. On our return to Caubul, Akrum Khan and the other Khans petitioned us to pardon Futteh Khan, who was now reduced to poverty. We assented. He was then brought into the presence by Akrum Khan. We remained some time in Candahar, in the charge of which we left Prince Zemaun, and sent Kaysur to Caubul."

Again was it in the power of Shah Soojah to conciliate the great Barukzye. Again was the opportunity lost. There was something in the temper of the monarch adverse to the formation of new, and the retention of old, friendships. Whilst Futteh Khan was again made to feel the impossibility of any lasting alliance with a prince who could not appreciate the value of his services, and who neither invited nor inspired confidence, the chain which bound Mooktor-ood-Dowlah to the sovereign was gradually relaxing, and a new danger began to threaten the latter. When the Shah was absent in the Sindh territory, the minister flung himself into the arms of Prince Kaysur, and publicly proclaimed him king. The rebels moved down upon Peshawur, and took possession of the city. Shah Soojah immediately began to direct his operations against that place. It was on the 3rd of March, 1808, that the two armies came into collision. "The sun rising," says Shah Soojah, who had halted for six days in the vicinity of Peshawur, hoping that the rebellious minister might perhaps repent, "we saw the opposite armies in battle array. Khojan Mahomed Khan, with a few Khans, followers from Mooktor-ood-Dowlah's army, did great deeds of valour, and at last dispersed our raw soldiers, leaving us alone in the field,

protected by a few faithful Douranees. We still remained on our guard, when our attendants warned us of the approach of Khojan Mahommed Khan. We rushed on the traitor sword in hand, and cut through four of the iron plates of his cuirass. Our chief eunuch, Nekoo Khan, brought his horse and accoutrements. Mooktor-ood-Dowlah then attacked our force; but he and his whole race perished. Prince Kaysur fled to Caubul. We then marched in triumphant pomp to the Balla Hissar of Peshawur." The gory head of the minister, borne aloft on a spear, and carried behind the conqueror, gave *éclat* to the procession, and declared the completeness of his victory.

Prince Kaysur, after a single night spent at Caubul, fled into the hill country; but was brought back to the capital by the emissaries of the Shah. The experience of past treachery and past ingratitude had not hardened the monarch's heart: and he again "pardoned the manifold offences of his nephew." In the mean while Mahmoud, who had been joined by Futteh Khan, and had been endeavouring to raise the sinews of war by plundering caravans, obtained, by the usual process of treachery, possession of Candahar, and then marched upon Caubul. Shah Soojah went out to meet him, and Mahmoud, rendered hopeless by disaffection in his ranks, broke up his camp and fled. The king then turned his face towards the west, and ordered his camp to be pitched on the road to Herat. "Hearing of our approach," he says, "our brother, Feroz-ood-Deen, then in charge of the fort of Herat, sent a petition, requesting our orders, proffering the tribute due, and offering to become security for Mahmoud's future behaviour. The same blood flowed in our veins, and we ordered one lakh of rupees to be paid him yearly from the tribute of Sindh, and conferred on him the government of Herat." This done, he proceeded to Caubul, and thence to Peshawur, where he "received

petitions from the Khan of Bahwulpore and Moozuffur Khan, Suddozye, stating that ambassadors from the Company's territories, by name Elphinstone and Strachey, had arrived, and requested orders." "We wrote to the ambassadors," says the Shah, "and ordered our chiefs to pay them every attention."

The history of this mission will be embraced in a subsequent chapter. It is not without some misgivings that I have traced these early annals of the Douranee Empire.* But the chronicle is not without its uses. It illustrates, in a remarkable manner, both the general character of Afghan politics, and the extraordinary vicissitudes of the early career of the man whom thirty years afterwards the British raised from the dust of exile, and rescatcd on the throne of his fathers. The history of the Afghan monarchy is a history of a long series of revolutions. Seldom has the country rested from strife—seldom has the sword reposed in the scabbard. The temper of the people has never been attuned to peace. They are impatient of the restraints of a settled government, and are continually panting after change. Half-a-century of turbulence and anarchy has witnessed but little variation in the national character; and the Afghan of the present day is the same strange mixture of impetuosity and cunning—of boldness and treachery—of generosity and selfishness—of kindness and cruelty—as he was when Zemaun Shah haunted the Council-Chamber of Calcutta with a phantom of invasion; and the vision was all the more terrible because "the shape thereof" no one could discern.

* The number of Oriental names which it is necessary to introduce—the repetition of incidents, greatly resembling each other, of conquest and re-conquest, of treachery and counter-treachery, of rebellions raised and suppressed—creates a confusion in the mind of the European reader. It is difficult to interest him in these indistinct phantasmagoric transitions. The events, too, which I have narrated have been chronicled before. I have endeavoured, however, to impart some novelty to the recital by following, and sometimes quoting, Shah Soojah's autobiography, which was not accessible to preceding historians.

CHAPTER III.

[1801—1808.]

France and Russia in the East—Death of Hadjee Khalil Khan—The Mission of Condolence—Aga Nebec Khan—Extension of Russian Dominion in the East—French Diplomacy in Persia—The pacification of Tilsit—Decline of French influence at Teheran.

THE intestine wars, which rent and convulsed the Afghan Empire, were a source of acknowledged security to the British power in the East. From the time when in the first year of the present century Captain Malcolm dictated at the Court of Teheran the terms of that early treaty, which French writers freely condemn, and Englishmen are ashamed to vindicate, to the date of the romantic pacification of Tilsit, the politics of Central Asia excited little interest or alarm in the Council-Chamber of Calcutta. India had ceased to bestir itself about an Afghan invasion. Instead of a shadowy enemy from beyond the Indus, the British had now to face, on the banks of the Jumna, a real and formidable foe. The genius of the two Wellesleys was called into action to curb the insolence and crush the power of the Mahrattas; and whilst we were alternately fighting and negotiating with Scindiah and Holkar, we scarcely cared to ask who reigned in Afghanistan; or if accident made us acquainted with

the progress of events, viewed with philosophic unconcern the vicissitudes of the Douranee Empire.

Content with the obligations imposed upon the Shah by the terms of the Malcolm treaty, and engaged in the solution of more pressing political questions at home, Lord Wellesley and his immediate successors bestowed little thought upon the Persian alliance. Throughout the remaining years of that nobleman's administration, one event alone occurred to rouse the Governor-General to a consideration of the temper of the Court of Teheran. That event filled him with apprehensions of danger preposterously incommensurate with its own importance, and ridiculously falsified by the result. An accident, and a very untoward one, it occurred at a time when the Indian Government had not yet recovered from the inquietude engendered by their disturbing dreams of French and Afghan invasion. The story may be briefly told. On the return of Captain Malcolm from Persia, one Hadjee Khalil Khan had been despatched to India to reciprocate assurances of friendship, and to ratify and interchange the treaty. The mission cost the Hadjee his life. He had not been long resident in Bombay,* when the Persian attendants of the ambassador and the detachment of Company's sepoy's forming his escort quarrelled with each other in the court-yard before his house, and came into deadly collision. The Hadjee went out to quell the riot, and was struck dead by a chance shot. The intelligence of this unhappy disaster was brought round to Calcutta by a king's frigate. The sensation it created at the presidency was intense. Every possible demonstration of sorrow was made by the Supreme Government. Minute guns were fired from the ramparts of Fort William. All levees and public dinners at

* Hadjee Khalil Khan reached Bombay on the 21st of May, 1802, and was killed on the 20th of July.

Government-House were suspended. Distant stations caught the alarm from the Council-Chamber of Calcutta. The minor presidencies were scarcely less convulsed. Bombay having previously thrown itself into mourning, instructions for similar observances were sent round to Madras; and two days after the arrival of the *Chiffone* it was announced in the Gazette that Major Malcolm, who was at that time acting as private secretary to Lord Wellesley, had been directed to proceed to Bombay, for the purpose of communicating with the relations of the late Hadjee Khalil Khan, taking with him, as secretary, his young friend and relative, Lieutenant Paisley, who had accompanied him on his first mission to Persia. At the same time Mr. Lovett, a civilian of no long standing, was ordered to proceed immediately to Bushire, charged with an explanatory letter from Lord Wellesley to the Persian king, and instructed to offer such verbal explanations as might be called for by the outraged monarch. For some days nothing was thought of in Calcutta beyond the circle of this calamitous affair. In other directions a complete paralysis descended upon the Governor-General and his advisers. The paramount emergency bewildered the strongest understandings, and dismayed the stoutest hearts at the Presidency. And yet it was said, not long afterwards, by the minister of Shiraz, that "the English might kill ten ambassadors, if they would pay for them at the same rate."

Major Malcolm left Calcutta on the 30th of August, and beating down the Bay of Bengal against the south-west monsoon, reached Masulipatam on the 19th of September. Taking dawk across the country, he spent a few days at Hyderabad in the Deccan, transacted some business there, and then pushed on to Bombay. Reaching that Presidency on the 10th of October,

he flung himself into his work with characteristic energy and self-reliance. Mr. Lovett, who had none of his activity, followed slowly behind, and fell sick upon the road. Jonathan Duncan, the most benevolent of men, was at that time Governor of Bombay, and some members of the Persian embassy had presumed upon his good-nature to assume an arrogance of demeanour which it now became Malcolm's duty to check.* He soon reduced them to reason. Before the end of the month every difficulty had vanished. Many of the Persians were personally acquainted with the English diplomatist. All were acquainted with his character. But above all, it was known that he was the bearer of the public purse. He came to offer the mourners large presents and handsome pensions from the Supreme Government,† and it is no matter of surprise, therefore, that he had soon, in his own words, "obtained from them a confidence which enabled him to set aside all intermediate agents, and consequently freed him from all intrigues."‡

It was arranged that the body of the deceased ambassador should be put on board at the end of October, and that, a day or two later, the vessel should set sail for the Persian Gulf. Mr. Paisley was directed to attend the

* "Mr. Duncan, with that good-nature and candour which he so eminently possesses, congratulated me this morning on the great change which had been effected in his Persian friends, and said my conduct had convinced him that an over-desire to conciliate had led him into error. The fact is, his errors all arose from timidity. The rascals bullied him."—[*Correspondence of Sir J. Malcolm: MS.—October 15, 1802.*]

† "I shall satisfy the reasonable expectations of Luteef," wrote Major Malcolm from Bombay, in October,

1802, "remunerate his expense, authorise a handsome present to the Hadjee's son and wives at Bushire, a distribution of alms at Kurbulai, and make a noble present to every one in the embassy in the name of the Governor-General, and not exceed the limits of one lakh of rupees. The pensions which I shall recommend will amount to 46,000 rupees per annum. You have here the outline of my plans, and I am sanguine in the hopes that they will be ultimately crowned with success."—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir J. Malcolm.*]

‡ *MS. Correspondence.*

Hadjee's remains, and was charged with the immediate duties of the mission.* When the vessel reached Bush-ire, it was found that the death of the Hadjee had created little sensation in the Persian territories, and that before the intelligence was ten days old it had been well-nigh

* "I shall send," wrote Major Malcolm, "Mr. Paisley with the Hadjee's body, which will not only be considered a high compliment, but be useful in a thousand ways. It will preserve this transaction from the touch of Mr. Manesty and Mr. Jones. It will enable me to convey a correct state of the feeling here on the subject to many respectable Persians, and I shall obtain from Mr. P. a true account of the manner in which the transaction is received in Persia. He will give Lovett information which will secure him from error at the outset, and be of the highest utility to him during his residence in India."—[*M.S. Correspondence.*] It is not certain, however, that the high compliment here designed was duly appreciated by the Persians. Sir Harford Jones (from whose "touch" the transaction was to be preserved) says that "it seems to have escaped Marquis Wellesley that that which might be considered a compliment at Calcutta, might in Arabia, Turkey, and Persia, be regarded so improper as almost to become an insult. . . . The Persian moollahs as well as the Persian merchants at Bagdad, were shocked, and on my applying to old Sulemein Pacha for certain honours to be paid to the corpse, when removed from Bagdad to be carried to Nejeef, he said, 'Very well; as you desire it to be done, it shall be done: but Hadjee Khalil Khan lived an infidel, and with infidels, and was, therefore, destined to hell; he was, however, murdered by infidels, and so became a *shahyde* (martyr); but his former friends have robbed him of this chance, by deputing an infidel to attend his corpse to the grave; his fate, therefore, is now fixed, and you may carry him to the devil in any manner you like best.'"—[*Sir Harford Jones's account of the transactions of H. M.'s mission to the Court of Persia*, &c. Note vii.] It is curious, but somewhat humiliating, to read the different versions of the same transactions put forth by Jones and Malcolm, and their respective adherents. For example, Sir Harford Jones says that when the Hadjee's body reached Bagdad, Mr. Day, a Bombay civilian, who had been deputed to accompany it into the interior, took fright at the plague, and abandoned his charge. "Mr. Day's alarm was so great," he says, "as to become most tormenting to himself, and most ridiculous and troublesome to us, who had stood the plague the preceding year. I, therefore, re-shipped him for Bussorah as soon as possible, and undertook to receive and execute such wishes as the Khan's relatives expressed to me." Now the account given of this matter by one of the gentlemen of Malcolm's mission, set forth that "Jones has frightened away Mr. Day by alarming accounts of the plague."—"On this subject," it was added, "I need make no remarks to you, who know him so well. This might be improper, and would, I imagine, be perfectly unnecessary." I have dwelt upon these personal matters at greater length than they deserve, because they illustrate the feelings, on either side, with which Jones and Malcolm, at a later and more important period, were likely each to have regarded the parallel but antagonistic mission of the other to the Persian Court. The bitterness which then overflowed was the accumulated gall of years.

forgotten. The Resident at Bushire, a Persian of good family, naturalised in India, and employed by the Company—an astute diplomatist and a great liar—had thought it necessary to testify his zeal by circulating a false version of the circumstances attending the death of the Hadjee, and calumniating the memory of the deceased. There was no need, indeed, of this. The Persian Government seems to have regarded the death of the Hadjee with exemplary unconcern; and marvelled why the English should have made so great a stir about so small a matter. If a costly British mission could have been extracted out of the disaster, the Court would have been more than satisfied; whilst they who were most deeply interested in the event, moved by the same *sacra fames*, thought rather of turning it to profitable account than of bewailing the death of their relative and friend.

The brother-in-law of the late envoy lost no time in offering his services to fill the place of the deceased. The name of this man was Aga Nebec Khan. He was the son, by a second connexion, of the mistress of Mr. Douglas, chief of the Bussorah factory, and had been Mr. Jones's moonshee, on a monthly salary of thirty rupees. The Hadjee himself had been a person of no consideration. Half-minister and half-merchant, he had thought more of trading upon his appointment than of advancing the interests of the state; and Nebec Khan, who had embarked with him in his commercial speculations, now lusted to succeed his murdered relative in his diplomatic office, as well as in the senior partnership of the mercantile concern. And he succeeded at last. It cost him time, and it cost him money to accomplish his purpose; but partly by bribery, partly by cajolery, he eventually secured the object of his ambition.* It was not, however, till three

* Especial instructions having been given to the British mission to secure the appointment of a man of rank as successor to Khalil Khan, the in-

full years had passed away since the death of the Hadjee, that his brother-in-law reached Calcutta, "not exactly to fill his relative's place, but to exercise the triple functions of minister, merchant, and claimant of blood-money, which he roundly assessed at twenty lakhs of rupees."

And in those three years a great change had come over the Supreme Government of India. A long war, pro-

trigues of Aga Nebée to obtain the appointment greatly embarrassed our diplomatists in Persia. But it was acknowledged that the aspirant was a man of good temper, good abilities, and more than average respectability. He professed himself to be heart and soul the friend of the English; and, doubtless, was perfectly sincere in his attachment to their wealth and profusion. Like all his countrymen, he was capable of profound dissimulation, and lied without the slightest remorse. Knowing the views of the British functionaries with regard to the succession, he sent through his brother to Mr. Lovett an account of an interview he had had with the Shah, representing that he had urged upon his majesty the propriety of appointing an elchee of high rank as successor to Hadjee Khalil Khan, but that the king had insisted upon appointing him, saying, "I did not call Mahomed Nebée here for nothing. I sent for him to learn the circumstances of the business, and now that he has given me a true and just account of all particulars, I must exemplify my justice to the world. Mahomed Nebée and Hadjee Khalil Khan were brothers, and everybody knows they were of one mind. They were brothers and relations, and, in a word, like father and son. But Mahomed Nebée's capacity is greater than his was, and it is now three years since he has borne the expenses of the embassy, and has had everything ready for the mission. It is, therefore, proper that I should appoint him, in order that his rightful claims may be satisfied, and my

justice made known to all princes and nations of the world." In this letter an amusing attempt is made to persuade Mr. Lovett to proceed to Teheran as an ambassador from the British-Indian Government, "with handsome and splendid equipments, so as to exceed by many degrees those with which Major Malcolm travelled; for this is the particular wish of the king and his ministers, in order that it may get abroad universally that the English had, for the sake of apologising, made these new preparations far exceeding the former, and that it is evident they highly regard the friendship of the king, and were not to blame for the death of Hadjee Khalil Khan. His majesty, too, when he hears of the splendour and greatness of your retinue, will be much pleased, and most favourably inclined . . . *Do not be sparing in expenditure, or presents, or largesses. Every country has its customs; and every nation may be won somehow or other. The people of Persia in the manner above stated.*" It is hard to say which is to be most admired, the candour or the craft of this. Mr. Lovett, who was lying sick at Bushire, had no authority to proceed as an ambassador to Teheran; but Malcolm was sorely afraid lest these temptations should be too much for an ambitious and self-confident young man—a character which, however, it is by no means certain that Lovett deserved, for he candidly acknowledged his own unfitness for the post, and said that it would suit his capacity much better to serve in a subordinate position.—[*MS. Records.*]

secuted with extraordinary vigour, had exhausted the financial resources of the state. The reign of India's most magnificent satrap—the "sultanised" Governor-General—was at an end. A new ruler had been sent from England to carry out a new policy; and that policy was fatal to the pretensions of such a man as Nebee Khan.

He had fallen, indeed, upon evil times. Those were not days when moneyed compensations were likely to be granted even to ambassadors, or when there was any greater likelihood of an Indian statesman embarrassing himself with distant engagements which might compel him to advance an army into unknown regions, or send a fleet into foreign seas. The system, on which the future government of India was to be based, comprehended a scheme of painful internal economy and rigid abstinence from external interference. Lord Cornwallis went out a second time to India, pledged to a policy purely domestic. It was his design to turn his back upon other states, and to fix his eyes intently on our own. The government was on the verge of absolute bankruptcy. There were large bodies of irregular troops in our service who could not be discharged, even when they were useless, because they could not be paid. To reconcile two adverse schemes of policy, or rather to prevent an abrupt and violent transition from one to the other, was the difficult duty of Sir George Barlow. This long-tried and intelligent public servant had been appointed to succeed Lord Wellesley as Governor-General of India; but now, with affectionate earnestness and loyal zeal, he exerted himself as senior member of council, to assist the government of the friend who had reluctantly snatched from him the object of his ambition. The brief reign of the aged marquis was one of doubt and uncertainty in the minds of the foremost officers of the state. They who, under Lord Wellesley, had pursued, and were still pursuing, the course of policy favoured by that nobleman,

knew not how to transfer their allegiance to a ruler pledged to the abandonment of those measures which they believed his predecessor would have resolutely maintained. Colonel Malcolm, who had been long acting as Political Agent with Lord Lake's army, determined to throw up his appointment; and the commander-in-chief saw nothing but discredit before him if he continued at the head of a force condemned to ignominious inactivity. And so it happened, that when Lord Cornwallis, in October, 1805, sunk under his senile infirmities, and died at Ghazee pore, Sir George Barlow, who succeeded to the chief scat in the government, was embarrassed by threatened desertions, and compelled to use all his influence to prevent abrupt changes in the constitution of the executive, which might have locked the wheels of government, and plunged the affairs of the state into a sea of dangerous and bewildering confusion.

In the month of October, 1805, the vessel bearing the Persian ambassador sailed into the harbour of Bombay. He was welcomed with all the formalities befitting his station, and with every demonstration of respect. But a series of untoward circumstances, like those which, in the reign of our second James, delayed the public audience of Lord Castlemaine at Rome, postponed, for the space of many months, the reception of Nebbee Khan at Calcutta. At length, on the 28th of April, 1806, the ceremony of presentation took place. The Governor-General lined the public way with soldiers, and sent the leading officers of the state to conduct the merchant-minister to his presence. It was an imposing spectacle, and a solemn farce. The Persian elchee knew that he had come to Calcutta not to treat of politics, but of pice; and the English governor, while publicly honouring the Persian, secretly despised him as a sordid adventurer, and was bent upon baffling his schemes. At the private interviews which took

place between the British functionaries and Nebee Khan, there was little mention of political affairs. There was a long outstanding money account between the parties, and the settlement of the account-current was the grand object of the Mission. The Persian, who thought that he had only to ask, found that times had changed since the commencement of the century, and was overwhelmed with dismay when the British secretary demonstrated to him that he was a debtor to our government of more than a lakh of rupees. Satisfied with existing relations of friendship between Persia and Great Britain, and never at any time disposed to embarrass himself with unnecessary treaties, Sir George Barlow declined to enter into new political negotiations, or to satisfy the exorbitant personal claims of the representative of the Persian Court. Nebee Khan left Calcutta a disappointed man. The speculation had not answered. The investment had been a bad one. He had toiled for four long years; had wasted his time and wasted his money only to be told at last, by an officious secretary, that he owed the British-Indian Government a lakh and seven thousand rupees. In January, 1807, carrying back a portfolio, not more full of political than his purse of financial results, the ambassador left Calcutta. Neither the merchant nor the minister had played a winning game. Compensations and treaties were alike refused him; and he went back with empty hands.

In the mean while, the French had succeeded in establishing their influence at the Court of Teheran.* They

* Some French agents, under the feigned character of botanists, had visited Teheran before Buonaparte invaded Egypt, and wished Aga Mahomed Khan, the then ruler of Persia, to seize Bussorah and Bagdad. They also endeavoured to stimulate the Shah to assist Tippoo Sultan against

the British, and endeavoured to obtain permission to re-establish their footing at Gombroon. Had the emissaries appeared in a more openly diplomatic character, they might have succeeded, for Aga Mahomed Khan coveted the territory named, and might have been induced to co-ope-

had long been pushing their intrigues in that quarter, and now at last were beginning to overcome the difficulties which had formerly beset them. The Malcolm treaty of 1800 bound the contracting parties to a defensive alliance against France; but the terms of that treaty had been scarcely adjusted, when French emissaries endeavoured to shake the fidelity of Persia by large offers of assistance. The offers were rejected. The French were told, in emphatic language, that "if Napoleon appeared in person at Teheran, he would be denied admission to the centre of the universe." But, undaunted by these failures, they again returned to tempt the embarrassed Persian. Every year increased the difficulties of the Shah, and weakened his reliance on the British. He was beset with danger, and he wanted aid. The British-Indian Government was either too busy or too indifferent to aid him. The energetic liberality of the French contrasted favourably with our supineness; and before the year 1805 had worn to a close, Persia had sought the very alliance and asked the very aid, which before had been offered and rejected.

The assistance that was sought was assistance against Russia. In 1805, the Shah addressed a letter to Napoleon, then in the very zenith of his triumphant career, seeking the aid of the great western conqueror to stem the tide of Russian encroachment. For years had that formidable northern power been extending its conquests to the eastward. Before the English trader had begun to organise armies in Hindostan, and to swallow up ancient principalities, the grand idea of founding an Eastern empire had been grasped by the capacious mind of Peter the Great. Over the space of a century, under

rate in an attack upon the Turkish dominions; but the doubtful character of the agents thwarted their schemes, and he gave little heed to the representations of the *savans*.—
[See *Brigadier Malcolm to Lord Minto: MS. Records.*]

emperors and empresses of varying shades of character, had the same undeviating course of aggressive policy been pursued by Russia towards her eastern neighbours. The country which lies between the Black Sea and the Caspian was the especial object of Muscovite ambition. A portion of it, occupied by a race of hardy, vigorous mountaineers, still defies the tyranny of the Czar, and still from time to time, as new efforts are made to subjugate it, new detachments of Russian troops are buried in its formidable defiles. But Georgia, after a series of wars, notorious for the magnitude of the atrocities which disgraced them, had been wrested from the Persians before the close of the last century, and in 1800 was formally incorporated with the Russian Empire by the Autocrat Paul.

These encroachments beyond the Caucasus brought Russia and Persia into a proximity as tempting to the one as it was perilous to the other. The first few years of the present century were years of incessant and sanguinary strife. In the Russian Governor-General, Zizianoff, were combined great personal energy and considerable military skill, with a certain ferocity of character which seldom allowed him to display much clemency towards the vanquished. A Georgian by extraction, and connected by marriage with the princes of that country, he never forgot the cruelties which had alienated for ever the hearts of the Georgian people from their old Mahomedan masters. The restless aggressive spirit of the great Muscovite power was fitly represented by this man. He was soon actively at work. He entered Daghistan—defeated the Lesghes with great slaughter—carried Ganja by assault, and massacred the garrison—a second time defeated the Lesghes, after a sanguinary engagement; and then returning to Tiflis, addressed the governors of Shamakhee, Sheesha, and other fortresses to

the north of the Aras, threatening them with the fate of Ganja if they did not make instant submission in compliance with the orders of the Russian monarch, who had instructed him not to pause in his career of conquest until he had encamped his army on the borders of that river.

In the spring of 1804, Abbas Mirza, the heir-apparent to the throne of Persia, took the field at the head of a formidable army, and marched down upon Erivan, the capital of Armenia. The governor refused to abandon his charge, and when the prince prepared to attack him, called the Russian general to his aid. The result was fatal to the Persian cause. In the month of July, the army of the Crown-Prince of Persia and the Russian and Georgian force under Zizianoff, twice encountered each other, and twice the Persian army was driven back with terrible loss. On the second occasion the rout was complete. Abbas Mirza lost everything. Taking refuge in a small fort, he endeavoured to negotiate terms with Zizianoff; but the Russian general told him haughtily, that the orders of his sovereign were, that he should occupy all the country along the Aras River, from Erivan to the borders of the Caspian, and that he chafed under the instructions which confined his conquests to a limit so far within the boundaries of his own ambition.

The disasters of the heir-apparent brought the king himself into the field. Moving down with a large army to the succour of the prince, he again encountered the Russian forces, but only to see his troops sustain another defeat. Disheartened by these repeated failures, the Persians then changed their tactics, and adopting a more predatory style of warfare, harassed their northern enemy by cutting off his supplies. The year being then far advanced, Zizianoff drew off his forces, and prepared to prosecute the war with renewed energy in the following

spring. That spring was his last. An act of the blackest treachery cut short his victorious career. He was conducting in person the siege of Badkoo, when the garrison, making overtures of capitulation, invited the Russian general to a conference for the settlement of the terms. He went unattended to a tent that had been pitched for his reception, and was deliberately set upon and slain by a party of assassins stationed there for the bloody purpose. The King of Persia, when the tidings reached him, grew wild with delight. In an ecstasy of joy he published an inflated proclamation, setting forth that he had achieved a great victory, and slain the celebrated Russian commander. But other thoughts soon forced themselves upon the king and his ministers. A black cloud was brooding over them—the retribution of an outraged nation. A signal chastisement was expected. New armies were looked for; new encroachments anticipated from the North; new forfeitures of dominion seemed to be inevitable—the righteous result of an act of such atrocious perfidy. Persia felt her weakness, and, in an extremity which seemed to threaten her very existence, trusted to foreign European aid to rescue her from the jaws of death.

It was at this time, when threatened with the vengeance of Russia, that the Persian Court addressed a letter to Napoleon, then in the full flush of unbroken success, seeking the aid of that powerful chief. It was at this time, too, that Aga Nebee Khan commenced his journey to India, and it is probable that if the Indian Government had shown any disposition to aid the Persian monarch in his efforts to repel the aggressions of the Muscovite, the French alliance would have been quietly but effectually relinquished. But the supineness of England was the opportunity of France. The Indian Government had left the settlement of the Persian question to

the Cabinet of St. James's, and the Cabinet had dawdled over it as a matter that might be left to take care of itself. In this extremity, the Persian monarch forgot the treaty with the British, or thought that the British, by deserting him in his need, had absolved him from all obligations to observe it, and openly flung himself into the arms of the very enemy which that treaty so truculently proscribed.

In the autumn of 1805, an accredited French agent arrived at Teheran. The result of the Indian mission was then unknown; and Colonel Romieu was received with that barren courtesy which almost amounts to discouragement. It would probably, too, have been so regarded by the French envoy, had not death cut short his diplomatic career, after a few days spent at Teheran, and a single audience of the king. But the following spring beamed more favorably on the diplomacy of France. The cold indifference of England had been ascertained beyond a doubt, and the danger of Russian aggressiveness, now sharpened by revenge, was becoming more and more imminent. All things conspired to favour the machinations of the French; and they seized the opportunity with vigour and address. Another envoy appeared upon the scene. Monsieur Jaubert was received with marked attention and respect. He came to pave the way for a splendid embassy, which Napoleon proposed to despatch to the Persian Court. Overjoyed at these assurances of friendship, the king eagerly grasped the proffered alliance. He was prepared to listen to any proposal, so that his new allies undertook to co-operate against his Russian enemies. He would join in an invasion of Hindostan, or, in concert with the French, amputate any given limb from the body of the Turkish Empire. There was much promise of aid on either side, and for a time French counsels were dominant at the Persian capi-

tal. Two years passed away, during which the emissaries of Napoleon, in spite of accidental hindrances, contrived to gain the confidence of the Court of Teheran. They declared that England was a fallen country—that although protected for a time by its insular position, it must fall a prey to the irresistible power of Napoleon—that, as nothing was to be expected from its friendship, nothing was to be apprehended from its enmity; and so, industriously propagating reports to our discredit, they established themselves on the ruins of British influence, and for a time their success was complete.

And so it happened, that when the British Governments in London and Calcutta awoke almost simultaneously to the necessity of “doing something,” they found a well-appointed French embassy established at Teheran, under General Gardanne, an officer of high reputation, whom even hostile diplomatists have delighted to commend; they found a numerous staff of officers,* civil and military, with engineers and artificers, prepared to instruct and drill the native troops, to cast cannon, and to strengthen the defences of the Persian cities; they found French agents, under the protection of duly constituted *mehmendars*, visiting Gombroon, Bushire, and other places, surveying the harbors of the gulf, and intriguing with the ambassadors of the Ameers of Sindh. And it was pretty well ascertained that the invasion of India by a French and Persian army was one of the objects of the treaty, which, soon after the arrival of Gardanne at Teheran, was sent home for the approval of Napoleon.

But a mighty change had, by this time, passed over the politics of Europe. It was in July, 1807, that on a

* General Gardanne's suite seems to have consisted of “twenty-five officers, two clergymen, a physician, some artillery and engineer officers, thirty European officers, and a number of artificers,”—at least, I find it so represented by Malcolm.—[*MS. Records.*]

raft floating upon the bosom of the River Niemen, near the city of Tilsit, in the kingdom of Prussia, the Emperor Alexander and Napoleon Buonaparte, after a brief and bloody campaign, embraced each other like brothers. In the short space of ten days, fifty thousand of the best French and Russian troops had been killed or disabled on the field of battle. Yet so little had been the van-tage gained by either party, that it is even to this day a moot point in history, as it was in the cotemporary records of the war, whether the first peaceful overture was made by the Russian monarch or the Corsican invader. Both powers eagerly embraced the opportunity of repose; and in a few days the scene was changed, as by magic, from one of sanguinary war and overwhelming misery to one of general cordiality and rejoicing: The French and Russian soldiers, who a few days before had broken each other's ranks on the bloody plains of Eylau and Friedland, now feasted each other with overflowing hospitality, and toasted each other with noisy delight. Such, indeed, on both sides was the paroxysm of friendship, that they exchanged uniforms one with the other, and paraded the public streets of Tilsit in motley costume, as though the reign of international fraternity had commenced in that happy July. And whilst the followers of Alexander and Napoleon were abandoning themselves to convivial pleasures, and the social affections and kindly charities were in full play, those monarchs were spending quiet evenings together, discussing their future plans, and projecting joint schemes of conquest. It was then that they meditated the invasion of Hindostan by a confederate army uniting on the plains of Persia. Lucien Buonaparte, the brother of the newly-styled emperor, was destined for the Teheran mission; and no secret was made of the intention of the two great European potentates to commence, in the following spring, a hostile

demonstration "contre les possessions de la Compagnie des Indes."

But by this time both the British and the Indian Governments had awakened from the slumbers of indifference in which they had so long been lulled. They could no longer encourage theories of non-interference whilst the most formidable powers in Europe were pushing their conquests and insinuating their intrigues over the countries and into the courts of Asia. Lord Minto had succeeded Sir George Barlow as head of the Supreme Government of India. Naturally inclined, as he was instructed, to carry out a moderate policy, and to abstain as much as possible from entanglements with native rulers, he would fain have devoted himself to the details of domestic policy, and the replenishment of an exhausted exchequer. But the unsettled state of our European relations compelled him to look beyond the frontier. What he saw there roused him into action. It is observable that statesmen trained in the cabinets and courts of Europe have ever been more sensitively alive to the dangers of invasion from the North than those whose experience has been gathered in the fields of Indian diplomacy. Lord Wellesley and Lord Minto were ever tremulous with intense apprehension of danger from without, whilst Sir John Shore and Sir George Barlow possessed themselves in comparative confidence and tranquillity, and, if they were not wholly blind to the peril, at all events did not exaggerate it. There is a sense of security engendered by long habit and familiarity with apparent danger, which renders a man mistrustful of the reality of that which has so often been shown to be a counterfeit. The inexperience of English statesmen suddenly transplanted to a new sphere of action, often sees in the most ordinary political phenomena strange and alarming portents. It is easy to be wise after the event.

We know now that India has never been in any real danger from French intrigue or French aggressiveness; but Lord Wellesley and Lord Minto saw with different eyes, and grappled the shadowy danger as though it were a substantial fact. In those days such extraordinary events were passing around, that to assign the limits of political probability was beyond the reach of human wisdom. The attrition of great events had rubbed out the line which separates fact from fiction, and the march of a grand army under one of Napoleon's marshals from the banks of the Seine to the banks of the Ganges did not seem a feat much above the level of the Corsican's towering career.

Rightly understood, the alliance between the two great continental powers which seemed to threaten the destruction of the British Empire in the East, was a source of security to the latter. But in 1807, it was not so clearly seen that Persia was more easily to be conciliated by the enemies, than by the friends, of the Russian Autocrat—that the confederacy of Alexander and Napoleon was fatal to the Persian monarch's cherished hopes of the restitution of Georgia, and the general retrogression of the Russian army; and that, therefore, there was little prospect of the permanency of French influence at the Court of Teheran. The danger, then, seemed imminent, and only to be met by the most active measures of defence. Averse as it long had been to unnecessary interference with foreign states, the British-Indian Government reluctantly entered upon a new game of external diplomacy; but, wisely determined to prosecute it with consummate vigour of execution applied to a far-reaching comprehensiveness of design. To baffle European intrigue, and to stem the tide of European invasion, it seemed necessary to enlance in one great network of diplomacy all the states lying between the frontier of India and the eastern

points of the Russian Empire. Since India had been threatened with invasion at the close of the last century, the Afghan power had by disruption ceased to be formidable. We had formerly endeavoured to protect ourselves against France on the one side, and Afghanistan on the other, by cementing a friendly alliance with Persia. It now became our policy, whilst endeavouring to re-establish our influence in that country, to prepare ourselves for its hostility, and to employ Afghanistan and Sindh as barriers against encroachments from the West; and at the same time to increase our security by enlisting against the French and Persian confederacy the friendly offices of the Sikhs. That strange new race of men had by this time erected a formidable power on the banks of the Sutlej, by the mutilation of the Douranee Empire; and it was seen at once that the friendship of a people occupying a tract of country so situated, and inspired with a strong hatred of the Mahomedan faith, must, in such a crisis as had now arrived, be an object of desirable attainment. Whilst, therefore, every effort was to be made to wean the Court of Teheran from the French alliance, preparations were commenced, in anticipation of the possible failure of the Persian mission, for the despatch of British embassies to the intervening countries.

The duty of negotiating with the Sikh ruler was entrusted to Mr. Metcalfe, a civil servant of the Company, who subsequently rose to the highest place in the government of India, and consummated a life of public utility in a new sphere of action, as Governor-General of our North American colonies. Mr. Elphinstone, another civil servant of the Company, who still lives, amidst the fair hills of Surrey, to look back with pride and contentment upon a career little less distinguished than that of his cotemporary, was selected to conduct the embassy to the Court of the Douranee monarch. Captain Seton

had been previously despatched to Sindh; and Colonel Malcolm, who was at that time Resident at Mysore, was now again ordered to proceed to the Persian Court, charged with duties which had been rendered doubly difficult by our own supineness, and the contrasted activity of our more restless Gallic neighbours.

CHAPTER IV.

[1808—1809.]

The Second Mission to Persia—Malcolm's Visit to Bushire—Failure of the Embassy—His Return to Calcutta—Mission of Sir Harford Jones—His Progress and Success.

WHEN, in the spring of 1808, Colonel Malcolm a second time steered his course towards the Persian Gulf, another British diplomatist had started, from another point, upon the same mission. Moved as it were by one common impulse, the Cabinet of England and the Supreme Council of India had determined each to despatch an embassy to the Court of Teheran. A curious and unseemly spectacle was then presented to the eyes of the world. Two missions, in spirit scarcely less antagonistic than if they had been despatched by contending powers, started for the Persian Court; the one from London—the other from Calcutta. The Court of St. James had proposed to assist Persia by mediating with St. Petersburg, and Mr. Harford Jones, a civil servant of the Company, who was made a baronet for the occasion, was deputed to Teheran to negotiate with the ministers of the Shah. It was originally intended that he should proceed to Persia, taking the Russian capital in his route; but the pacification of Tilsit caused a departure from this design, and Sir Har-

ford Jones sailed for Bombay with the mission on board one of his Majesty's ships. He reached that port in the month of April, 1808, just as the embassy under Brigadier-General Malcolm, despatched by the Governor-General to the Court of Teheran, was putting out to sea on its way to the Persian Gulf.*

Sir Harford Jones, therefore, rested at Bombay, awaiting the result of Malcolm's proceedings. On the 10th of May the latter reached Bushire, and on the 18th wrote to Sir George Barlow, who had succeeded to the governorship of Madras, "I have not only received the most uncommon attention from all here, but learnt from the best authority that the accounts of my mission have been received with the greatest satisfaction at Court. The great progress which the French have made and are daily making here satisfied me of the necessity of bringing matters to an early issue. I have a chance of complete victory. I shall, at all events, ascertain exactly how we stand, and know what we ought to do; and if I do not awaken the Persian Court from their delusion, I shall at least excite the jealousy of their new friends. I send Captain Paisley off to-morrow for Court—ostensibly, with a letter for the king; but he has secret instructions, and will be able to make important observations. He is charged with a full declaration of my sentiments and instructions in an official form, and you will, I think, when you see that declaration of the whole proceeding, think it calculated for the object. I have endeavoured

* Malcolm wrote from Bombay on the 15th of April, stating the course of policy he intended to pursue, and the tone of remonstrance he purposed to adopt, at the same time urging the Governor-General to suspend the mission of Sir Harford Jones. In this letter he says that he should despair, "from his knowledge of Sir

Harford's character and former petty animosities on the same scene, of maintaining concord and unanimity in the gulf one hour after his arrival. Sir Harford," he added, "is not in possession of that high local respect and consideration in the countries to which he is deputed that should attach to a national representative."

to combine moderation with spirit, and to inform the Persian Court, in language that cannot irritate, of all the danger of their French connexion. Captain Paisley will reach Court on the 20th of June, and on the 15th of July I may expect to be able to give you some satisfactory account of his success.”*

But in this he was over-sanguine. The French envoy had established himself too securely at Teheran to be driven thence by the appearance of a Malcolm at Bushire. A little too impetuous, perhaps—a little too dictatorial, that energetic military diplomatist commenced at the wrong end of his work. He erred in dictating to the Persian Court the dismissal of the French embassy as a preliminary to further negotiations, when in reality it was the end and object of his negotiations. He erred in blurting out all his designs, in unfolding the scheme of policy he intended to adopt, and so committing himself to a line of conduct which after-events might have rendered it expedient to modify or reject. He erred in using the language of intimidation at a time when he should have sought to inspire confidence and diffuse goodwill among the officers of the Persian Court. These may not have been the causes of his want of success; but it is certain that he was completely unsuccessful. The large promises and the prompt movements of the French contrasted favourably with our more scanty offers and more dilatory action; and although Malcolm now came laden with presents, and intending to pave his way to the Persian capital with gold, the British mission was received with frigid indifference, if not with absolute disrespect. The despatch of Captain Paisley to the capital was negatived by the Persian Government. His progress was arrested at Shiraz; and there, at that pro-

* *MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm.*

vincial town, whilst a French and a Russian agent were basking in the royal sunshine at Teheran, and were entertained as guests of the prime minister, the representative of Great Britain was told that he must conduct his negotiations and content himself with the countenance of lesser dignitaries of state. Persian officers were instructed to amuse the British envoys, and to gain time. "The earnest desire of the king," wrote the prime minister to Nussur-ood-Dowlah, at Shiraz, "is to procrastinate, and to avoid all decided measures. You must, therefore, amuse General Malcolm by offering your assistance;" and in this and other letters the local officers at Shiraz were instructed by every means in their power to detain Captain Paisley at that place; but he had departed before they were received, or it is difficult to say in what manner the imperial mandate might not have been obeyed.* "A consideration of all these things," wrote Captain Paisley to government, "induces me to conclude that the subsisting alliance between the Government of France and Persia is more intimate than we have yet imagined—that its nature is more actively and decidedly hostile to our interests than has hitherto been suspected, and that the reliance of the king on the promises and assurances of the French agents must be founded on better grounds than have yet come to our knowledge."†

Chafed and indignant at the conduct of the Persian Court, General Malcolm at once came to the determination to return immediately to Calcutta, and to report to

* *MS. Records.*—Copies of these letters were obtained by the Mission, and are now before me. I do not find in them anything to give colour to the suspicion that it was intended forcibly to detain Paisley at Shiraz. But such appears to have been the impression at the time, and may have been the case. Sir James Mackin-

tosh, writing from Bombay to his son-in-law, Mr. Rich, at Bagdad, counsels him to be prepared for a rapid retreat, and adds, "Paisley was very nearly made prisoner at Shiraz." He narrowly escaped, as will be gathered from the subsequent note, being seized and detained at Bushire.

† *MS. Records.*

the Supreme Government the mortifying result of his mission. On the 12th of July, he sailed from Bushire, leaving the charge of the embassy in the hands of Captain Paisley, who remained at his post only to be insulted, and at last narrowly escaped being made a prisoner, by a precipitate retreat from the Persian dominions.* The failure of the Mission, indeed, was complete. Persia continued to make professions of friendship to the British Government; but it was obvious that at that moment neither British diplomacy nor British gold, which was liberally offered, could make any way against the dominant influence of the French mission. Napoleon's officers were drilling the Persian army, casting cannon, and strengthening the Persian fortresses by the application, for the first time, to their barbaric defences, of that science which the French engineers had learnt in such perfection from the lessons of Vauban and Cormontagne.

Of the wisdom of Malcolm's abrupt departure from Bushire, different opinions may be entertained. On the day after he embarked for Calcutta, one of the most sagacious men then in India was seated at his writing-table discoursing, for Malcolm's especial benefit, on the advantages of delay. "As to the real question," wrote Sir James Mackintosh to the brigadier-general, "which you have to decide in the cabinet council of your own understanding, whether delay in Persia be necessarily and universally against the interests of Great Britain, it is a question on which you have infinitely greater means of correct decision than I can pretend to, even if I were foolish enough, on such matters, to aspire to any rivalry with a man of your tried and exercised sagacity. I

* "General Malcolm came round to Calcutta in August to communicate the information he had been able to collect, leaving his secretary at Abushire, who was obliged subsequently to quit the place to prevent his person being seized by the Persian Government, instigated by the French agents."—[*From letter of Instructions sent by Supreme Government to Mountstuart Elphinstone, in 1809.—MS. Records.*]

should just venture in general to observe, that delay is commonly the interest of the power which is on the defensive. As long as the delay lasts, it answers the purpose of victory, which, in that case, is only preservation. It wears out the spirit of enterprise necessary for assailants, especially such as embark in very distant and perilous attempts. It familiarises those who are to be attacked with the danger, and allows the first panic time to subside. It affords a chance that circumstances may become more favorable; and to those who have nothing else in their favour, it leaves at least the 'chapter of accidents.'"* The 'chapter of accidents' is everything in Oriental diplomacy. Malcolm, too impetuous to profit by it, left his successor to reap the harvest of altered circumstances. Sir Harford Jones, who had been waiting his opportunity at Bombay, entered the arena of diplomacy a few months later than Malcolm, and his progress was a long ovation. It was the 'chapter of accidents' that secured his success.

On the first receipt of intelligence of General Malcolm's withdrawal, Lord Minto despatched a letter to Sir Harford Jones, urging him to proceed to Persia with the least possible delay. But he very soon revoked those orders, and addressed to the English envoy stringent communications, desiring him to remain at Bombay.†

* Another passage from this letter is worth quoting in the margin:—"What I doubt (for I presume to go no further), is, whether it be for our interest to force on the course of events in the present circumstances. You are a man of frank character and high spirit, accustomed to represent a successful and triumphant government. You must from nature and habit be averse to temporise. But you have much too powerful an understanding to need to be told, that to temporise is sometimes absolutely necessary, and that men of

your character only can temporise with effect. When Gentz was in England, in 1803 (during the peace), he said to me, that 'it required the present system, and the late ministers;' for nothing required the reality and the reputation of vigour so much as temporising." — [*Mackintosh to Malcolm: July 13, 1808.*]

† The first letter appears to have been written on the 10th of August. On the 20th, Brigadier Malcolm reached Calcutta. On the 22nd, a letter was sent to Sir Harford Jones, directing him to wait for further

Malcolm had reached Calcutta in the interval; and set forth, in strong colours, the nature of the influence that had been opposed to his advance, and mapped out a plan of action which, in his estimation, it would now be expedient to adopt. Lord Minto appears to have fallen readily into the views of the military diplomatist; but he failed altogether to cut short the career of Sir Harford Jones. Letters travelled slowly in those days; and before the missive of the Governor-General, ordering his detention, had reached Bombay, the vessel, which was to bear the representative of the Court of London to the Persian Gulf, had shaken out its sails to the wind.

On the 14th of October, the Mission reached Bushire. Sir Harford Jones set about his work earnestly and conscientiously. He had difficulties to contend against of no common order, and it must be admitted that he faced them manfully. He found the Persian authorities but too well disposed to arrogance and insolence; and he met their pompous impertinence with a blustering bravery, which may have been wanting in dignity, but was not without effect. He bullied and blasphemed, and after a series of not very becoming scenes, made his way to Teheran, where he was graciously received by the Shah. The 'chapter of accidents' had worked mightily in his favour. The reign of Gallic influence was at an end. Our enemies had overreached themselves, and been caught in their own toils. Before Napoleon and the Czar

orders, and on the 29th another and more urgent communication was addressed to him, with the intent of annulling his mission. It appears that in those days a letter took more than three weeks to accomplish the journey between Calcutta and Bombay. The Governor-General's letter of the 10th of August must have reached the latter place about the 5th of September. Jones says, "In seven days from receiving Lord Minto's letter, I embarked on board *La Nereide*, and she, with the *Sapphires*, and a very small vessel belonging to the Company, called the *Sylph*, sailed out of Bombay harbour for Persia on the 12th of September, 1808." Malcolm had calculated that the letter of August 22nd would reach Bombay by September 13th; and that in all probability Jones would not embark before that date. But, as usual, he was over-sanguine.

had thrown themselves into each other's arms at Tilsit, it had been the policy of the French to persuade the Persian Court that the aggressive designs of Russia could be successfully counteracted only by a power at enmity with that state; and now Napoleon boasted that he and the emperor were "invariablement unis pour la paix comme pour la guerre."

Skilfully taking advantage of this, Sir Harford Jones ever as he advanced inculcated the doctrine which had emanated in the first instance from the French embassy, and found every one he addressed most willing to accept it. There was, fortunately for us, a galling fact ever present to the minds of the Persian ministers to convince them of the truth of the assertion that it was not by the friends, but by the enemies of Russia that their interests were to be best promoted. The French had undertaken to secure the evacuation of Georgia; but still the Russian eagles were planted on Georgian soil. The star of Napoleon's destiny was no longer on the ascendant. The "Sepoy General," whom he had once derided, was tearing his battalions to pieces in the Spanish peninsula. Moreover, the French had lost ground at Teheran, in their personal as in their political relations. They had not accommodated themselves to the manners of the Persian Court, nor conciliated, by a courteous and considerate demeanour, the good-will of their new allies. They were many degrees less popular than the English, and their influence melted away at the approach of the British envoy. The Shah, too, had by this time, not improbably, become suspicious of the designs of the French. It was urged with some force that if the French invaded India they would not leave Persia alone. Mahomed Shereef Khan, who was sent by Nussur-oolah-Khan to General Malcolm just before his departure from Bushire, to repeat the friendly assurances of the Persian Government, very sagaciously ob-

served, "If the French march an army to India, will they not make themselves masters of Persia as a necessary prelude to further conquests, and who is to oppose them after they have been received as friends? But our king," continued the old man, "dreams of the Russians. He sees them in Aderbijan, and within a short distance of the capital, and, despairing of his own strength, he is ready to make any sacrifice to obtain a temporary relief from his excessive fear. In short," he concluded, whilst strong emotion proved his sincerity, "affairs have come to that state that I thank my God I am an old man, and have a chance of dying before I see the disgrace and ruin of my country."* Had Malcolm remained a little longer at Bushire, he would have seen all these dreams of French assistance pass away from the imaginations of the Persian Court, and might, under the force of altered circumstances, have carried everything before him.

When Sir Harford Jones reached the Persian capital, General Gardanne had withdrawn; and there was little difficulty in arranging preliminaries of a treaty satisfactory alike to the Courts of Teheran and St. James's. The work was not done in a very seemly manner; but it was not less serviceable when done, for the manner of its doing. Perhaps there is not another such chapter as this in the entire history of English diplomacy. Jones had left Bombay under the impression that he was acting in accordance with the wishes of Lord Minto; but he had not been long in Persia before he found that the Indian Government was bent upon suspending his operations, and, failing in this, was resolute to thwart him at every turn. They dishonoured his bills and ignored his proceedings. A totally opposite course of policy had been determined upon in the Council-Chamber of Calcutta.

* *MS. Correspondence.*

The proceedings of Brigadier Malcolm at Bushire had not been viewed with unmixed approbation by Lord Minto and his council; but he was the employé of the Indian Government; they had confidence in the general soundness of his views; and they felt that in the maintenance of their dignity it was expedient to support him. In no very conciliatory mood of mind had that eager, energetic officer returned to Calcutta. Chewing the cud of bitter fancies as he sailed up the Bay of Bengal, he prepared a plan for the intimidation of Persia, and was prepared with all the details of it when, on the 20th of August, he disembarked at Calcutta. There was no unwillingness in the Council-Chamber to endorse the schemes of the baffled diplomatist. It was agreed that an armament should be fitted out to take possession of Karrack, an island in the Persian Gulf, or, in the delicate language of diplomacy, "to form an establishment" there, as "a central position equally well adapted to obstruct the designs of France against India, as to assist the King of Persia (in the event of a renewal of the alliance) against his European enemies."

These measures were described as "entirely defensive, and intended even to be amicable." The command of the force was of course conferred on Brigadier Malcolm. "I am vested," he wrote to his friends at Madras, "with supreme military and political authority and control in the Gulf, to which, however threatening appearances may be, I proceed with that species of hope which fills the mind of a man who sees a great and unexpected opportunity afforded him of proving the extent of his devotion to the country."* It was to be a very pretty little army, with a compact little staff, all the details of which, even to the allowances of its members, were soon drawn up and recorded. An engineer officer was called in and consulted about the plan of a fort, with a house

* *MS. Correspondence.*

for the commandant, quarters for the officers, barracks for the men, a magazine to contain five hundred barrels of gunpowder, and everything else complete. The activity of the Brigadier himself at this time was truly surprising. He drew up elaborate papers of instructions to himself, to be adopted by the Governor-General. One of these, covering twenty-six sheets of foolscap, so bewildered Lord Minto in his pleasant country retreat at Barrackpore, that he could come to no other conclusion about it than that the greater part had better be omitted. Every conceivable contingency that could arise out of the movements of France or Russia, or dispensations of Providence in Persia, was contemplated and discussed, and instructions were sought or suggested; but a new series of contingencies occurred to the Brigadier after he had embarked, and a new shower of *ifs* was poured forth from the Sand-heads still further to perplex the government. Lord Minto had by this time fully made up his mind that the French were coming; wrote of it, not as a possible event, but as a question merely of time; and contemplated the probability of contending in Turkey for the sovereignty of Hindostan.* But the French had too much work to do in Europe to trouble themselves about operations in the remote Asiatic world.

At the beginning of October Malcolm started for Bombay, from which Presidency the details of his army were to be drawn. But before the vessel on which he had embarked had steered into the black water, he was

* For example, in one of his minutes written about this time, he says: "It appears doubtful whether the partition of European Turkey will precede the French expedition to India. There appears to be reason, by the late advices, to suppose that the consent of the Porte may have been obtained to the passage of the French army. In this case, the approach of the army may be earlier than on the former supposition, and it will have less difficulty to encounter. The route of our divisions must in this event be through the territory of Bagdad. . . . I incline, under all the circumstances now known to me, to think that the force stationed at Karrack should be greater than we before looked to."—[MS. Records.]

recalled, in consequence of the receipt of intelligence of Sir Harford Jones's intended departure for Bushire. This was, doubtless, very perplexing; but Malcolm did not despair. "I am this instant," he wrote, on the 5th of October, "recalled to Calcutta in consequence of advices from Sir Harford, stating his intention of leaving Bombay on the 11th of September. As it appears possible that he may not be ready to sail before the 13th, he will, I think, receive a letter from this government of the 22nd, desiring him to stay; and if that has the effect of stopping him, the letter of the Supreme Government, dated the 29th, will probably put an end to the mission."* Vain hope! Sir Harford Jones was at that time not many days' sail from Bushire; and before Malcolm finally quitted Calcutta, had started fairly on his race to Teheran.

The Supreme Government now more urgently than before addressed instructions to the nominee of the British Cabinet, ordering him to retire from Persia. The Council were all agreed upon the subject. Mr. Lumsden and Mr. Colebrooke, who were Members of Council at the time, expressed themselves even more strongly on the subject than the Governor-General. All were certain that Sir Harford Jones must either fail signally, or disgrace and embarrass the government by a delusive success. He might be repulsed at Bushire—or baffled at Shiraz—or drawn into a treaty favorable to the French. In any case, it was assumed that he was sure to bring discredit on the British Government and the East India Company. Without asserting that the conduct of the Persian Court had been such as to call for a declaration of war from the rulers of British India, it was contended, and not, perhaps, without some show of reason, that any advances made at such a time would compromise its dignity, and that the attitude to be assumed should be

* *MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm.*

rather one of reserve than of solicitation. Both parties were in an embarrassing position. Whilst Lord Minto was writing letters to Sir Harford Jones, telling him that if he did not immediately close his mission, all his proceedings would be publicly repudiated,* Sir Harford Jones, as representative of the sovereign, was repudiating the proceedings of the Supreme Government of India, and offering to answer with his fortune and his life for any hostile proceedings on the part of the British not provoked by the Persians themselves. The government did its best to disgrace Sir Harford Jones by dishonouring his bills and ignoring his proceedings; and Sir Harford Jones lowered the character of the Indian Government by declaring that it had no authority to revoke his measures or to nullify his engagements with the Persian Court.

In the mean while, Brigadier Malcolm had sailed down the Bay of Bengal, and reached Bombay by the first day of December. His instructions had preceded him; a select force of some two thousand men was ready to receive his orders; and by the 18th of January the expedition was prepared, at all points, to take ship for the Gulf, to pounce upon Karrack, and to strike a great panic into the rebellious heart of the Persian nation. "But," says Malcolm, in one of his voluminous narratives, "the accounts I heard of the great change caused in the affairs of Europe by the general insurrection of Spain, and the consequent improbability of Buonaparte making an early attack upon India, combined with the advance of Sir Harford Jones into Persia, led me to suspend the sailing of the expedition. My conduct on that occasion

* In one of these letters, written in February, 1809, it is said: "I cannot venture to omit acquainting you that in the event of your not complying, without further reference or delay, with the instructions conveyed in this letter, by closing your mission and retiring from Persia, it has been determined, and measures have been taken accordingly, to disavow your public character in that country subsequent to your receipt of my letter of 31st of October."—[*MS Records.*]

was honoured by approbation, and the expedition countermanded." But though the military expedition was countermanded, the Mission was not. Malcolm, confident that the proceedings of such a man as Jones, for whom he entertained the profoundest possible contempt, could be attended only with disastrous failure, determined to proceed to Persia, in spite of the civilian's accounts of his favorable reception. "I have private accounts from Bushire," he wrote on Christmas-eve, "which state that Sir Harford Jones is, or pretends to be, completely confident of a success which every child with him sees is unattainable through the means he uses. His friends now believe he will go on in spite of any orders he may receive from the Governor-General. *I mean to go on too* (there is, indeed, nothing in these despatches that can stop me for a moment), so we shall have a *fine mess* (as the sailors say) in the Gulf. Will this lesson cure the fools at home of their mischievous propensity to interfere with the local government?"* Such, indeed, was the feeling between the two diplomatists, and so little was it disguised, that the Shah, perceiving plainly the true state of the case, abused Malcolm before Jones, and Jones before Malcolm, as the best means, in his opinion, of ingratiating himself with them both.

In March, 1809, the preliminary treaty was interchanged, on the part of their respective sovereigns, by Sir Harford Jones and Meerza Sheffee. No treaty before or since was ever interchanged under such extraordinary and unbecoming circumstances. Meerza Sheffee, the prime minister of Persia, was an old and infirm man. His age and rank among his own people had given him a sort of license to speak with an amount of freedom such as is not tolerated among Europeans in

* MS. Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm—December 24, 1808.

social, much less in diplomatic, converse. There was an intentional indefiniteness in one of the articles of the treaty, which was to be referred to the British Government for specific adjustment, and Meerza Sheffee, not understanding or approving of this, blurted out that the British envoy designed to "cheat" him. The figure used in the Persian language is gross and offensive, and the word I have employed but faintly expresses the force of the insult. Jones had not patience to bear it. He started up, seized the counterpart treaty lying signed on the carpet before him, gave it to Mr. Morier, and then turning to the astonished Wuzceer, told him that he was a stupid old blockhead to dare to use such words to the representative of the King of England, and that nothing but respect for the Persian monarch restrained him from knocking out the old man's brains against the wall. "Suiting the action to the word, I then," says Jones, in his own narrative of his mission, "pushed him with a slight degree of violence against the wall which was behind him, kicked over the candles on the floor, left the room in darkness, and rode home without any one of the Persians daring to impede my passage." It is not surprising that, after such a scene as this, the Persians should have shaken their heads, and said, "By Allah ! this Feringhee is either drunk or mad."

But, in spite of this and other untoward occurrences, the preliminary treaty was duly interchanged. It bears date the 12th of March, 1809. By this treaty, the Shah of Persia, declaring all other engagements void, covenanted "not to permit any European force whatever to pass through Persia, either towards India, or towards the ports of that country." He further undertook, in the event of the British dominions in India being attacked or invaded by the Afghans or any other power, "to afford a force for the protection of the said dominions."

On the part of the British Government, it was stipulated that in case any European force had invaded, or should invade, the territories of the King of Persia, his Britannic Majesty should afford to the Shah a force, or, in lieu of it, a subsidy, with warlike ammunition, such as guns, muskets, &c., and officers, to the amount that might be to the advantage of both parties, for the expulsion of the force so invading." The general provisions of the treaty were included in this, but the anticipated arrival of Brigadier Malcolm with a military expedition in the Persian Gulf rendered it necessary that certain specific articles should be inserted with especial reference to this movement. It was provided that the force should on no account possess itself of Karrack or any other places in the Persian Gulf; but that, unless required by the Governor-General for the defence of India, it should be held at the disposal of the Persian shah, the Shah undertaking to receive it in a friendly manner, and to direct his governors to supply it with provisions "at the fair prices of the day." This preliminary treaty was conveyed by Mr. Morier, accompanied by a Persian ambassador, to England, where it was duly ratified and exchanged; and Sir Harford Jones was confirmed in the post of Resident Minister at the Court of Teheran.

The success of Sir Harford Jones embarrassed the British-Indian Government even more than did the apprehension of his failure. Lord Minto and his councillors were sorely perplexed. It was desirable, as they all acknowledged, that the engagements entered into by the representative of the Court of England should be completed; but it was not desirable that the Indian Government should be degraded in the eyes of the Persian Court. Between their anxiety to accept the thing done and to disgrace the doer, they were thrown into a

state of ludicrous embarrassment.* The resolution, however, at which they arrived was, under all the circumstances of the case, as reasonable as could be expected. It was determined to accept Sir Harford Jones's treaty, and to leave the dignity of the British-Indian Government to be vindicated on a future occasion. Perhaps it would have been even better quietly to have lived down the slight; for it cost a large sum of money, expended on a profitless mission, to satisfy the British-Indian Government that it had re-established its name at the Court of the Persian, and confounded the malignity of Jones.†

This is a curious chapter of diplomatic history. It is one, too, which has evoked from the partisans of both parties an extraordinary amount of bitterness. It hardly

* Mr. Lumsden wrote a minute (July 10, 1809), in which he says: "We must either continue to employ at the Court of Persia an agent in whom we have no confidence, who has studiously endeavoured to degrade the authority of the Government of India, under whose orders he was placed; or by deputing an agent of our own to Teheran, whilst he continues there, acknowledged by the Persian Government as the representative of his Britannic Majesty, we may expose the public interest to danger from the presence in Persia of two distinct authorities, who cannot act in concert, but will, it is to be feared, necessarily counteract each other, and occasion great perplexity to the Persian minister." At the same time, Mr. Colebrooke wrote: "Our situation as regards Sir H. Jones is certainly difficult and embarrassing in the extreme. We are desirous of fulfilling the engagements he has contracted, and of maintaining the alliance concluded by him. And we are glad that he should continue at the Court of Persia to watch the

wavering counsels of that Court, and to oppose the revival of French influence at it, until he can be replaced by our own envoy; but by either re-accrediting him with the Court, or silently executing his engagements, we acquiesce in the continued degradation of this government."—[*MS. Records.*]

† On the details of Malcolm's supplementary mission it is unnecessary to dwell. Its political results are compressible into the smallest possible space. It was, indeed, a mere pageant; and a very costly, but not wholly a profitless one. It yielded a considerable harvest of literary and scientific results, among the most important of which may be mentioned Malcolm's voluminous "*History of Persia*" and the present Sir Henry Pottinger's admirable "*Account of Beluchistan*;" works which, it has been well said, "not only filled up an important blank in our knowledge of the East, but which materially helped to fix the literary character of the Indian services."

comes within the proper compass of this history to narrate the incidents of the ambassadorial war, still less to comment upon them. But it may be briefly remarked that all parties were wrong. Mistakes were unquestionably committed by Malcolm, by Jones, and by the Indian Government. There was an old feud between the two former, which certainly did not tend to smooth down the difficulties which had arisen; and the Government of India was not very patient of the home-born interference with what it conceived to be its rightful diplomatic prerogative. Jones, though receiving his credentials from the Crown, was placed in subordination to the local government, and ought to have obeyed its mandates. That he would have done so, had he received instructions to withdraw before he had fairly entered upon his work, it is only just to assume; but having once made his appearance in Persia as the representative of his sovereign, he thought that he could not abandon his mission under orders from the Indian Government without lowering the dignity of the Crown.

He did not commence his expedition to Persia until some time after Malcolm had retired; and when he went at last, it was under urgent solicitations from the Governor-General to proceed there without delay. He cannot, therefore, be charged with indelicacy or precipitancy. He went only when the coast was clear. That he succeeded better than Malcolm is to be attributed mainly to the "chapter of accidents." Malcolm says that it was owing to his measures that Jones was enabled to advance—that the rumour of his military preparations overawed the Persian Court—and that all the rest was done by bribery. We are not bound to accept this version of the story. That there was at that time little hope of any mission succeeding without bribery no man knew better than Malcolm. But

Malcolm could not bribe his way to Teheran in the spring, because the French were then dominant at Court. Had he waited till the autumn, the road would have been lubricated for him. One thing at least is certain. Nothing could have been more fortunate than the miscarriage of Malcolm's military expedition. It would have embarrassed our future proceedings, and entailed a large waste of public money. As to the question of prerogative, it would be little use to discuss it. It has been settled long ago. The "fools at home," as Malcolm called them, have taken into their own hands the appointment of our Persian ambassadors, and the conduct of all subsequent negotiations with the Persian Court. Henceforth we shall have to regard the relations subsisting between Persia and Great Britain as affairs beyond the control of the East India Company and their representatives, and to look upon the ministers of the Crown as responsible for all that we have to contemplate in that quarter of the world.*

* From 1826 to 1835, however, Government; but the diplomatic control was not relinquished by the nomination of the Persian envoy was again vested in the Indian Foreign-office.

CHAPTER V.

[1808—1809.]

The Missions to Lahore and Caubul—The Aggressions of Runjeet Singh—Mr. Metcalfe at Umritsur—Treaty of 1809—Mr. Elphinstone's Mission—Arrival at Peshawur—Reception by Shah Soojah—Withdrawal of the Mission—Negotiations with the Ameers of Sindh.

It was whilst Sir Harford Jones was making his way from Bombay to Bushire, in the months of September and October, 1808, that the Missions to Caubul and Lahore set out for their respective destinations. Since the time when the rumored approach of an army of invasion under Zemaun Shah had troubled the hearts of the English in India, the might of the Douranee rulers had been gradually declining, as a new power, threatening the integrity of the Afghan dominions, swelled into bulk and significance, and spread itself over the country between the Sutlej and the Indus. It was no longer possible to regard with indifference the growth of this new empire. We had supplanted the Mahrattas on the banks of the Jumna, and brought ourselves into proximity to the Sikhs. A group of petty principalities were being rapidly consolidated into a great empire by the strong hand and capacious intellect of Runjeet Singh, and it had become apparent to the British that thenceforth, for good or for evil, the will of the Sikh ruler must

thought of negotiation, or rather capitulation, for such it would be, but in the present unsettled state of affairs there is no authority possessing sufficient weight to protect us all through the country; besides, we should hardly be justified, even for the security of our persons and property, to abandon even one position in the country. Another alternative would be for us to retire to the Balla Hissar; but this, I also fear, would be a disastrous retreat, and we should have to sacrifice a vast deal of property. We probably should not succeed in getting in our heavy guns, and they would be turned with effect by the enemy against the citadel. We should have neither food, nor firewood to cook it; for these essentials we should be dependent upon, sortées into the city, in which, if we were beaten, we should of course be ruined.

Upon the whole, I think it best to hold on where we are as long as possible, in the hope that something may turn up in our favour. It is possible that we may receive reinforcements from Candahar. Now that the cold weather is coming on, the enemy will disperse to their houses very soon, and there will only be left the rebel chiefs and their immediate followers. We should not, therefore, be molested during the winter: and though circumstances make it likely that we should be attacked soon if we are to be attacked at all, a victory on our side might change the whole aspect of affairs.

I was disposed to recommend that a decisive blow should be struck somewhere to retrieve our fortunes, and that Mahomed Khan's fort should be captured. But I have since had reason to believe no solid advantage, such as commanding the road to the Balla Hissar, would result therefrom; that possibly we might not be able to hold it; and, in short, that the benefit of the measure would not counterbalance the risk attending it.

In eight or ten days more, we shall be better able to judge whether there is any chance of an improvement in our position, and, if not, it will remain for the military authorities to decide whether it would be more prudent to attempt a retreat to Jellalabad, or to retire into the Balla Hissar. If we could only bring in sufficient provisions for the winter, I would on no account leave the cantonment. Yours, &c. &c.,

W. H. MACNAGHTEN.

Many and anxious, by this time, had been the discussions relative to the abandonment of the cantonment, and

the concentration of the British troops in the Balla Hissar. The measure had been recommended by the engineer, Sturt, and others, very soon after the first outbreak of the insurrection. The Envoy had favoured it at an earlier, as he did at a later, period of the siege; but he seems at this time to have been more than usually alive to the difficulties of the movement. The General had scarcely any opinion at all on the subject. But the Brigadier was resolutely opposed to it. His arguments were not very overwhelming—but they were overwhelmingly advanced; and he seems for some time to have borne down the better reason of all who supported the measure. No one in the whole force was more profoundly impressed with a conviction of the disadvantages of the cantonment as a military position than Brigadier Shelton himself. He has left on record, in emphatic language, his opinions upon this point; but he could see in the extreme insecurity of the cantonment an argument only for a discreditable retreat. He could not see that if the extent of the cantonment-works were such as to render their defence difficult, and external operations on a large scale impossible, there was in this circumstance abundant reason for the removal of the force to a position cursed with none of these annihilating evils.

In the Balla Hissar the troops would have been free from molestation. They would not, as in cantonments, have been harassed and dispirited by the necessity of manning works exposed at every point to the attacks of the enemy. They could have sallied out from such a position in large bodies—have attacked the city and the neighbouring forts—have obtained supplies from the surrounding country—and held their own till the coming spring. But against all this it was alleged that the removal of the force from the cantonment to the Balla Hissar would be a hazardous operation—that it could not be accomplished without great loss, including, in all

probability, the entire sacrifice of the sick and wounded. That the movement would not have been free from danger is true. What movement could be free from danger, at such a time?—what warlike operations ever are free from danger? But that it would have necessarily involved the total sacrifice of the sick and wounded, is only to be assumed upon the hypothesis, that the curse which had so long brooded over us would still have worked for our own undoing, and that, therefore, no precautions would have been taken to protect them.*

Other arguments against the movement were also adduced. It was said that there was a scarcity of firewood in the Balla Hissar; and that there was no forage for the horses. But to this it was replied that there was a sufficiency of wood for purposes of cooking, that more might be obtained by sallies into the city, and that the improved shelter and increased comforts of the troops in the Balla Hissar would, under the most unfavorable circumstances, compensate for the want of firing. With regard to the forage, it was replied, that, if the horses could not be fed, they might be shot; and that there was little need for the employment of cavalry in such a position as the Balla Hissar.

One other argument, brought forward perhaps to give respectability to the whole, was urged by Shelton and his supporters. It was said that the abandonment of cantonments would have been an acknowledgment of defeat, and a triumph to our enemies. It is enough to say of this, that it was urged by men who were clamorous for an abandonment, not of one position, but of all our positions in

* Eyre says, that "though to carry the sick would be *difficult*, it still was not *impossible*; for so short a distance two or even three men could be conveyed in one *doolie*: some might manage to walk, and the rest could be mounted on yaboos, or camels, at the top of their loads." He says, too, that "if we had occupied the Seeah Singh hills with a strong party, placing guns there to sweep the plains on the cantonment side, the enemy could have done little to impede our march without risking a battle with our whole force in fair field, to which they were generally averse, but which would, perhaps, have been the *best* mode for us of deciding the struggle."

Afghanistan, and a precipitate retreat from the country. In the one case there might have been a partial triumph; in the other there must have been a complete one.

And so, owing mainly to the pertinacity of Brigadier Shelton, the only measure which could have saved the British force from destruction, and the British name from degradation, was rejected in this conjuncture. The troops remained in cantonments, threatened by the enemy and disheartened by the ominous gloom of their own officers, only to sustain another and more crushing defeat; and then to sink into a state of utter inactivity and prostration, whilst the leaders of the enemy were being brought over to consent to terms of capitulation, humbling indeed to the pride of the proudest and most successful nation of the world.*

* Some interesting particulars of the deaths of Lieutenant Rattray and Captain Codrington are given in a narrative of the events at Charekur, supplied by Major Pottinger's Moonshée. It appears that some chiefs had warned the former officer that if he left the fort he would be killed by the people outside; but that Rattray had replied, "They have eaten our salt, and could not be guilty of such an act." The Moonshée then goes on to say: "When Mr. Rattray came near them, all the chiefs paid their respects to him, saying, 'Inshallah! we shall go to-morrow and fight with Meer Musjedec.' Mr. R. said, 'Very good! If you will go, I shall give your people presents on their return; and to-morrow they shall receive five rupees each for their expenses, and I will also go with my sowars.' Mr. R. then turned to go back to the fort; but Jubbar Khan asked him to look at his men, to which he agreed, and turned back again. When he had taken about six or seven steps, one of the Kohistanes called him by name, and ran at him, firing his gun at Mr. R., who turned and ran towards the fort. I, the Meerza, and the Chuprassie, all ran towards the fort.

When I had nearly reached it I looked back, and saw Mr. R. lying down on the plain. I ran again towards him, and when near him, he called me and told me to take hold of him and help him into the fort. Directly I took hold of his hand about fifty Kohistanes fired, and Mr. R. received a ball in his forehead. I then ran back and got into the fort, where I found Major Pottinger looking towards the Kohistanes, and firing at them." The touching circumstances of Captain Codrington's death are thus related:—"When Captain Codrington saw that Major Pottinger was wounded, he went out to the two companies; but was very severely wounded by a shot in the back. All his Sepoys began to cry for him. . . . Captain Codrington was able to walk into cantonments; but fell down before he reached his house, and asked for water. We carried him and laid him on the same bed as Major Pottinger, whom he asked for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote a letter to his wife, whose picture he also gave to Major Pottinger. He lingered on until the night of the 7th, when he died. We buried him and Lieutenant Salisbury in one grave."—[*MS. Records.*]

CHAPTER V.

[November, 1841.]

Progress of the Insurrection—State of Affairs in the Balla Hissar—Shah Soojah—The Action of the 23rd of November—Defeat of the British Troops—Negotiations with the Enemy.

WHILST the feebleness of the military commanders in cantonments had been playing away stake after stake, until every hope of redemption was past, the King, shut up in the Balla Hissar, had been watching the progress of events with the profoundest anxiety and alarm. His bearing was that of a man heartless and hopeless under a pressure of unanticipated misfortunes; but prostrate and imbecile as he was in this conjuncture, he could see plainly enough the prostration and imbecility of the British chiefs. When the commissariat fort fell into the hands of the insurgents, the great calamity rose up suddenly before the inmates of the Balla Hissar. From the summit of the palace the enemy might be seen throwing the plunder over the walls of the fort, to be carried off by their companions below. There was a general rush upwards to this commanding position to witness the humiliating sight. The King beheld it with deep emotion, and, painfully agitated, turned to the Wuzeer and said, "Surely the English are mad."*

* *Lieutenant Melville's Narrative.*

Dejected as he was before, this crowning calamity sunk him into a state of still deeper dejection. Every report of the designs of the enemy, however incredible, filled him with new terror. It was said that the insurgents were running a mine from the Shor Bazaar under the very walls of the palace. Dreading an immediate explosion, he quitted his apartments, and took up his residence at the gate of the Harem, where, seated at a window commanding an extensive view of the cantonments and the surrounding country, he traced, through a telescope, the progress of the exciting events passing below. Day after day he sat at the same window, looking down, from morning to evening prayer, upon a scene which seldom yielded aught to comfort or reassure him. Shah Soojah had never been a courageous man; but he had always been a very proud one. That now, enfeebled and desponding, he should have clung to any support, turned anywhere for assistance, was not strange; but when they saw the pompous and arrogant monarch now so humbled and obsequious, laying aside all the environments of royalty, to which before he had clung with such pitiful tenacity, the English officers about him felt that the shock must have been great indeed so to revolutionise his whole nature. He made even the British subalterns sit beside him on chairs; conversed familiarly with them; enquired into their wants, and condescended to supply them. "If," said one who had good opportunities of narrowly watching the behaviour of the King at this time, "he is acting a part, he certainly performs it admirably!"

Other reports soon came in from the city, or started up in the Balla Hissar itself, still more to terrify the King. It was alleged that the Arabs in the fort* were about to

* Lieutenant Melville says they inhabitants; but I believe this to be composed a very large portion of the an error.

rise up in a body, to massacre the troops and to give the place over to the rebels. The King, who never withheld his belief from any story however improbable, seized the chief of the Arab tribe, and ordered that no women or children should be suffered to leave the fort. But women and children of all kinds were now clamouring for egress. Collecting in crowds before the Wuzzeer's house, they importuned him, with loud lamentations, to suffer them to depart. The Wuzzeer appealed to the King, who, strictly prohibiting the egress of any Arab families, suffered more than seven hundred other women and children to pass out of the fort. The English officers thought, that if all the Arabs and Afghans had been removed from the fort, and all the provisions secured for the use of the fighting men, the whole force might have been saved.*

The stores in the Balla Hissar had been indented upon for the use of the cantonment force,† and the available supplies having been thus reduced, the troops were put upon half-rations. The departure, however, of Brigadier Shelton and his escort had diminished the number of the fighting men, and now, under Major Ewart, they consisted of little more than the 54th N.I., a portion of the Horse Artillery troop under Captain Nicoll, and some details of irregular troops. At the

* Lieutenant Melville says: "Had the more vigorous and energetic measure been taken of turning every native out of the fort, were he Arab or Afghan, the salvation of the whole force might have been the result. Although all sorts of grain and other supplies were hardly procurable in the shops of the bazaar, yet it was known beyond a doubt that the private dwelling-houses, of which latter there were above a thousand in the fort, had each of them a four or six months' supply stored in their granary.

But no: this was not his Majesty's game; and the withering hand of feebleness which seemed at this period to guide and govern all our actions, did not even point out the necessity of its being put into execution. There would have been no oppression, no tyranny in so doing, as the price of every grain would have been punctually paid, and the Afghans and Arabs in the fort having friends living in the city would have been received by them with open arms."

† To no great extent, I believe.

points most exposed to attack the components of the little garrison were posted, and, kept always on the alert by reports of some threatened movement of the enemy, were always ready to give them a warm reception.

The affair of the 13th of November struck a gleam of hope into the garrison of the Balla Hissar. It seemed as though new courage had been infused into the cantonment force; and, as though to second the invigorated efforts of their comrades, the artillerymen in the citadel now began to ply their batteries with increased activity. They shelled the city, and attempted to fire it with carcasses; but the houses were not of a construction to be easily ignited, and the shelling produced little effect. The residence of Ameen-oollah Khan, in the city, was to be seen from the batteries; and the gunners, knowing the old man to be one of our deadliest enemies, singled it out as a mark, and poured their iron rain upon it. But the chief removed himself and his family to another house; and the only loss was among the horses.

A crisis was now at hand in the fate of the cantonment force. The 23rd of November was one of the most eventful and the most disastrous in the history of the insurrection. On that day a battle was fought, which ended in the disgraceful and calamitous defeat of the British troops. The enemy had been for some time making their appearance on the Beh-meru hill, and had repeatedly descended into the village, whence the British commissariat officers had been drawing supplies of grain.* Irri-

* "The enemy have for some time past daily made their appearance on the Beh-meru hills, and have repeatedly visited the village of Beh-meru, destroyed the houses, and plundered the inhabitants, and have expelled them from their homes on account of their aid to us, in bringing in grain. Two days ago, they surprised some of my people purchasing, wounded three, and seized about fifty maunds of wheat, as also a few of my camels and yaboos. I am daily up long before gunfire, and as soon as there is sufficient light commence purchasing; as it is only early in the morning that the villagers can venture to bring their stores for sale."—[*Captain Johnson's Journal: MS. Records.*]

tated by the assistance which the villagers had rendered us, the insurgents had destroyed the houses, pillaged the inhabitants, and attacked our commissariat people when getting in their supplies. This was not to be endured. Again the Envoy counselled the despatch of a strong force to occupy the Beh-meru hill, and to dislodge the enemy from a position in which they were able to work us such grievous annoyance. Again the Brigadier objected. Urging that the troops were exhausted and dispirited by constant harassing duty on the ramparts, that they had been living upon half-rations of parched wheat, and were therefore physically as well as morally enfeebled, he protested against a movement which he said would have the effect of increasing the number of wounded and sick, without leading to any solid advantage.* But these objections were overruled. On the 22nd a weak detachment had been sent out, under Major Swayne, but it had only added another to our list of failures. It was plain that something more must be done. A council of war was held that evening at the General's quarters, and it was determined, after much earnest discussion, on the special recommendation of the Envoy, that a strong force should be sent out before daybreak on the following morning, to occupy the Beh-meru hills. Shelton recommended that at the same time an attack should be made on the village. It was urged that the enemy would abandon the village as soon as our troops occupied the hill. The Brigadier declared that the occupation of the hill would only make the enemy hold the village with greater pertinacity. Shel-

* "I opposed it," says Shelton, in his own statement, "in the then dispirited state of the troops, harassed, exhausted, and fatigued from constant duty on the ramparts, night and day, and on half-rations of parched wheat, without any apparent ultimate advantage, with the certainty of diminishing our strength, and increasing our wounded, already too numerous to provide cattle for."—[*Statement of Brigadier Shelton: MS. Records.*]

ton's advice, however, was overruled. The force went out before daybreak,* took possession of the hill, and posted themselves on the north-eastern extremity, which overhung the village. With a fatuity only to be accounted for by the belief that the curse of God was upon those unhappy people, they had taken out a single gun. This gun was now placed in a position commanding an enclosure of the village, where the watch-fires gave out their bright tokens that numbers of the enemy were assembled. A shower of grape was presently poured in upon the bivouac. Starting up in confusion, the enemy gave back a fire from their jezails, but, abandoning the open space, sought the shelter of the houses and towers, and there exhausted their ammunition in a vain attempt to respond to our grape and musketry. Day dawned, and it was plain that the enemy were abandoning the village.† A few, however, still remained; and it was determined to carry the village by assault. A storming party was told off, under Major Swayne; but the village was not carried. The detachment seems to have gone down only to be fired at, and, after half an hour of inactivity, was recalled by the Brigadier.

The movement of the British troops, even in the dim twilight of the early morning, had been observed from the city; and soon large bodies of the enemy were moving across the plain. Horsemen and footmen streamed out in thousands to give the Feringhees battle. The

* The force consisted of five companies of her Majesty's 44th, under Captain Leighton; six companies of the 5th N.I., under Lieut.-Colonel Oliver; six companies of the 37th N.I., under Captain Kershaw, of the 13th; a squadron of the 5th Cavalry, under Captain Bott; a squadron of Irregular Horse, under Lieutenant Walker; 100 men of Anderson's Horse; one Horse Artillery gun, under Ser-

geant Mulhall; 100 Sappers, under Lieutenant Laing, of the 27th N.I.

† Shelton says that the event justified his anticipations. But it appears to me that this is at least doubtful. Our occupation of the hill really did compel the great body of the enemy to evacuate the village. Eyre says that, when it was subsequently attacked, there were certainly not more than forty men left in it.

horsemen stretched across the plain; the footmen covered an opposite hill, and some re-occupied the village.

The fire from the enemy's hill, which was separated from that on which our own troops were posted only by a narrow gorge, soon became hot and galling. Leaving five companies at the extremity of the hill, immediately above the village, Shelton took the remainder of his force, with the one gun, to a position near the brow of the hill, over the gorge, where the enemy were assembling in the greatest numbers. Here he formed his infantry into two squares, and massed his cavalry immediately in their rear. The one gun was nobly worked, and for a time, with terrible effect, told upon the Afghan multitudes, who had only a matchlock fire to give back in return. But thus nobly worked, round after round poured in as quickly as the piece could be loaded, it soon became unserviceable. The vent was so heated by the incessant firing, that the gunners were no longer able to serve it. Ammunition, too, was becoming scarce. What would not those resolute artillerymen have given for another gun? The firing ceased; and the British musketeers were then left to do their work alone. Little could they do, at such a time, against the far-reaching Afghan matchlocks. The enemy poured a destructive fire into our squares, but the muskets of our infantry could not reach the assailants. The two forces were at a distance from each other, which gave all the advantage to the Afghans, who shot down our men with ease, and laughed at the musket-balls, which never reached their position.

The nature of the country was altogether unfavorable to the British troops. Between them and the brow of the hill there was some rising ground, which prevented Shelton from seeing the movements of the enemy on the side of the hill. But from the cantonment could

be seen a party of Afghans crawling from the gorge up the hill-side, and rushing with sudden fury upon our infantry masses. The unexpected attack seems to have struck a panic into the heart of our troops, who turned and fled along the ridge like sheep. Shelton, who ever in the midst of danger stood with iron courage exposed to the thickest fire of the enemy, vainly called upon his men to charge. Not a man brought down his bayonet to the position which the English soldier burns to assume when he sees the enemy before him. The Afghans had planted a standard upon the hill, only some thirty yards from the British squares; and now an officer proclaimed a reward, equal in the eyes of the common Sepoy to a year's pay, to any one who would advance and take it. But not a man responded to the appeal. A great fear was upon them all. The officers stood up like brave men; and hurled stones at the advancing enemy.* But nothing seemed to infuse courage into our panic-struck troops. The enemy, emboldened by success, advanced in larger numbers, and rushed upon our single gun. Our cavalry, called upon to charge, refused to follow their officers. The artillerymen stood to their gun; two of them fell dead beside it; a third was deperately wounded; a fourth, when the enemy rushed upon it, clung to the carriage between the wheels, and miraculously escaped destruction. There, too, fell Lieutenant Laing, than whom there was not a braver soul in the field on that fatal day, waving his sword over the gun, cheering the men who were doing their duty, and calling on the rest to follow their example. But the heroic courage of the officers was thrown away upon the men. The gun was

* The officers who so distinguished themselves were Captain Macintosh and Lieutenant Laing, who were killed; and Captains Mackenzie, Troup, and Leighton.

lost, and our disheartened regiments were in confused and disastrous flight.

All, however, was not then lost. Shelton ordered the halt to be sounded. The flying regiments stopped and re-formed; then turning round, faced the enemy with a shout, and seemed ready to renew the conflict. But the Ghazecs now shrunk from the British bayonets. They were few in numbers; and they saw, too, a party of Anderson's Horse coming to the charge. Taking the horses and limber with them, they abandoned the gun, and fled.

In the mean while the enemy's cavalry on the plain had been thrown into confusion by the fall of their leader—Abdoollah Khan, Achetzkye. How he fell, or at what moment, is not precisely known.* It was generally believed that he was wounded by a shot from our gun—but there was a whisper, of doubtful credibility, to the effect that he had been struck down by the jezail of one of his own countrymen, who is said to have claimed a reward for the act. Be the history of his fall what it may, it discouraged and alarmed the Afghan cavalry on the plain. Seeing their leader carried from the field, they fled in confusion towards the city. Ignorant of the cause of their flight, the infantry began to follow them; and the excited lookers-on in cantonments now thought the day was ours. Macnaghten and Elphinstone were standing together on the ramparts watching the enemy as they streamed across the plain. The opportunity seemed a great one. To have sent out of cantonments a body of troops to pursue the flying enemy, and render their confusion complete,

* Eyre says he was struck by a shrapnel shot, before our gun was captured for the first time. Lady Sale places his fall after the capture of the gun. The subject is discussed in a subsequent page.

would have been to have secured a victory. The Envoy urged it upon the General; but the General said it was a wild scheme, and weakly negatived the worthy proposal.

At this moment, when the enemy were in flight, and our gun had been recaptured, Shelton might have brought back his force with credit to cantonments. But the opportunity was lost. The enemy returned to the field, recruited by new hordes whom they met emerging from the city; and soon the swelling multitude poured itself upon our battalions. The General had sent out new supplies of ammunition, with another limber and horses for the gun; and it was soon again in full operation, playing with murderous effect upon the masses of the enemy. But again the British muskets were found no match for the Afghan jezails. There were truer eyes and steadier hands, too, in the ranks of the enemy than in our own; and now with unerring aim the Afghan marksmen mowed down our men like grass. The artillerymen were falling fast at their gun; and Shelton, thinking it insecure, withdrew it to a safer position. Emboldened by this, the enemy continued the attack with increased vigour; and again the British troops began to cower beneath the fire of their assailants.

For now was seen again that spectacle which had before struck terror into our ranks and scattered our fighting men like sheep. A party of the enemy, headed by a band of furious Ghazees, emerged from the gorge, and crawling up the hill suddenly burst upon our wavering battalions. The British troops had been losing heart before this; and now it needed little to extinguish the last remaining spark of courage that warmed them. At this inauspicious moment, Shelton, who had been ever in the thickest of the fire, and who escaped by very miracle the balls which flew about the one-armed veteran, and

struck him five times with no effect,* fell back a few paces to order some more men to the front. Seeing the back of their commander turned towards the enemy, our front-rank men gave way;† and, in a minute, infantry and cavalry were flying precipitately down the slope of the hill. The Afghan horse, seizing the opportunity, dashed upon our retreating force; and presently friend and foe were mixed up in inextricable confusion. The artillerymen alone were true to themselves and their country. Thinking only of the safety of their gun, they dashed down the steep descent and drove into the very midst of the Afghan horsemen.‡ But they could not resist the multitudes that closed around them; and the gun, so nobly served and so nobly protected, fell a second time into the hands of the enemy.

The rout of the British force was complete.§ In one confused mass of infantry and cavalry—of European and native soldiers—they fled to the cantonment walls. Elphinstone, who had watched the conflict from the ramparts, went out, infirm as he was, and strove, with all the energy of which, in his enfeebled state, he was master, to rally the fugitives. But they had lost themselves past recovery; they had forgotten that they were British soldiers. The whole force was now at the mercy of the Afghans. Had they swept on, the cantonments must have fallen before them. The enemy were so

* "I stood by till my own clothes were riddled, having been struck by no less than five balls, none of which did much harm; one spent ball hit me on the head and nearly knocked me down; another made my arm a little stiff."—[*Brigadier Shelton's Narrative: MS. Records.*]

† I find this incident related in only one account of the engagement; but, as that one is Shelton's own, I have not hesitated to adopt the story.

‡ "As before," says Captain Johnson, "the artillerymen were the last to leave; and it was a glorious sight to see these brave men dashing down the steep descent at the most furious rate, in the midst of thousands of the enemy's cavalry, regardless of everything but the safety of their gun."

§ The loss upon our side was severe. Four officers fell—namely, Colonel Oliver, Captains Macintosh and Walker, and Lieutenant Laing. Six others were wounded.

mixed up with our men, that the guns on the ram-parts could not open upon them without destroying our retreating corps. But the insurgents made no effort to follow up the advantage they had gained. One of the leading chiefs, Osman Khan, suddenly drew off his men,* and, in a short time, the whole force had withdrawn, with shouts of exultation, to the city.†

"This," says Brigadier Shelton, in his narrative of the events, in which he bore so conspicuous a part, "concluded all exterior operations."‡ Nothing more was to be done by fighting. A general gloom hung over the cantonment. The most sanguine now began to despond. The troops had not only lost all heart—they had lost all discipline. The link which bound them to their officers seemed to be broken. The privations to which they were exposed were great. Cold, hunger, and fatigue

* Lady Sale says: "Osman Khan was heard by our Sepoys to order his men not to fire on those who ran, but to spare them. A chief, probably the same, rode round Kershaw three times when he was compelled to run with his men; he waved his sword over his head, but never attempted to kill him; and Captain Trevor says his life was several times in the power of the enemy, but he was also spared."

† "They seemed," says Lieutenant Melville, "astonished at their own success; and after mutilating in a dreadful manner the many bodies left on the hill, they retired with exulting shouts to the city."

‡ No small quantity of military criticism has been lavished upon this unfortunate action of the 23rd of November. Eyre's criticisms are well known; and their soundness has been acknowledged by almost every subsequent writer. Major Hough, however, says, with reference to Eyre's assertion that Shelton formed his infantry into squares on the Beh-meru hill, that the Brigadier assured him that he formed no squares at all,

but only threw back his flanks *en potence*. Captain Evans, of the 44th, also assured him that there were no squares. Every other writer, however, makes a similar assertion relative to the squares on the Beh-meru hill. Of the atrocity of the single gun there is only one opinion. With regard to the general plan of operations, Lady Sale says: "The misfortunes of the day are mainly attributable to Shelton's bad generalship, in taking up so unfavorable a position after his fault in neglecting to surprise the village and occupy, which was the ostensible object of the force going out." But I have shown that it was not Shelton's fault that the village was not surprised. A simultaneous attack on the village and on the hill was the course recommended by the Brigadier; but he was overruled in council. He went into action, feeling certain that the plan mapped out for him was a wrong one—and the battle was not fought the better for the feeling that he had been thwarted and opposed.

pressed upon them; and they had not strength to bear up against such a burden of woe. It was plain that no use could be made in the field of a force so feeble and dispirited. The time for action had passed. And so, when, on the day after this disastrous affair on the Behmeru hill, the enemy began to destroy the bridge which General Elphinstone, a short time before, had thrown over the Caubul River, the military chiefs looked idly on, whilst this outrage was being perpetrated almost within musket-shot of our position.

There were only two courses now open to the doomed force; and the political and military chiefs began again to take counsel together. The question of concentration in the Balla Hissar was first revived and discussed between them. John Conolly, at the instance of the King, wrote urgently to Macnaghten, recommending the measure as the only one that could now secure the safety and the honour of the British troops. But the military authorities had set their faces against it, and the Envoy yielded his assent to their opinions against his own better judgment. After a personal interview, on the morning of the 24th of November, at which the subject had been discussed between them, General Elphinstone addressed the following letter to the Envoy, seeking Macnaghten's opinion and stating his own:

24th Nov., 1841.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

With reference to our conversation this morning, I request you will let me know what are your views with respect to moving into the Balla Hissar as proposed to you, admitting the possibility of our holding out there. Our getting into it with our ammunition and numerous sick and wounded, amounting to near 700, would be attended with the greatest difficulty, if not be altogether impossible. The enemy, no doubt, in the greatest force would oppose us, which would oblige us to cover the operation with the

greatest part of our troops, and thereby leave the cantonment without sufficient defence.

I am the more confirmed in my opinion of the difficulty of the operation from the harassed and dispirited state of our troops, now so much reduced in numbers, and failure would tend to our certain destruction. With our means, it would take some days to remove the ammunition and stores, during which the enemy would be collecting a great number around us; our wounded would be increased, with diminished means of conveying them.

Would the Balla Hissar hold us with our followers, even after the sacrifice of our horses and cattle? I am told that water is already selling there at a high price, even with the present small garrison. We have, at least, barely twenty days' supplies, which, even if we could remove, we have little prospect of adding to at the Balla Hissar; a retreat from thence would be worse than from our present position, for, after abandoning our horses and means of transport, our sick, wounded, and stores, would have to be left behind at the mercy of the enemy.

I have conferred with Brigadier Shelton, the second in command, and he concurs with me in the above opinion.

Yours, &c.,

W. K. ELPHINSTONE.*

To this letter the Envoy replied:

MY DEAR GENERAL,

In reply to your note just received, I beg to state my opinion that the move into the Balla Hissar would be attended with the greatest difficulty, and I do not see what advantage could accrue therefrom, although the disadvantages, as pointed out by you, are apparent in the event of our ultimate retreat. As to the mere question of room for our troops and followers, I do not imagine that we should feel much difficulty on that account.

Yours, &c. &c.,

W. H. MACNAGHTEN.†

The question of a movement into the Balla Hissar

* Correspondence of Gen. Elphinstone: *MS. Records*. The substance of this letter is given in Eyre's journal.

† Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten: *MS. Records*.

having been thus disposed of for the present, the Envoy turned his thoughts towards that other course, which had been so long pressed upon him by the military chief. He began to think of negotiating with the enemy. But that he might not, save in the last extremity, enter upon a line of conduct against which the manliness of his nature revolted, he addressed a letter to the General, asking, in specific terms, whether he considered it possible any longer to maintain his position in the country. To this letter Elphinstone replied:

Caulul, 24th Nov., 1841.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, calling for my opinion as to whether, in a military point of view, it is feasible any longer to maintain our position in this country.

In reply, I beg to state, that after having held our position here for upwards of three weeks in a state of siege, from the want of provisions and forage, the reduced state of our troops, the large number of wounded and sick, the difficulty of defending the extensive and ill-situated cantonment we occupy, the near approach of winter, our communications cut off, no prospect of relief, and the whole country in arms against us, I am of opinion that it is not feasible any longer to maintain our position in this country, and that you ought to avail yourself of the offer to negotiate which has been made to you.

W. K. ELPHINSTONE.*

Upon the receipt of this letter the Envoy ceased to hesitate. The enemy had made pacific overtures to him, and he now believed that it was no longer his duty to refuse to listen to them. So he sent a message to the insurgent chiefs, intimating his willingness to receive a deputation from them, and to discuss the preliminaries of a treaty. The invitation was accepted. On the following day, Sultan Mahomed Khan, Barukzye, and

* *Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten: MS. Records.*

Meerza Ahmed Ali, Kuzzilbash, made their appearance at the bridge. Nothing could have been more unassuming than the ambassadorial cortége. The deputies rode sorry horses, and were attended only by their grooms. Captain Lawrence and Captain Trevor were sent out to meet them. The conference lasted two hours. Sultan Mahomed Khan, whose tone was insolent and uncompromising, demanded terms such as the English officers could not listen to without disgrace. The deputies then asked to see Macnaghten, and the party moved to cantonments. In the guard-room at one of the gateways the Envoy received the Afghan ambassadors. The discussion was long and animated. Sultan Mahomed, still arrogant and offensive, trode down, as with the heel of the conqueror, all the pretensions of his opponents; and declared that, as the Afghans had beaten us in battle, they had a right to dictate terms of capitulation. He demanded that the British should surrender at discretion, giving themselves up with all their arms, ammunition, and treasure, as prisoners of war. Macnaghten was not a man to submit to this dictation. The terms were resolutely rejected. "We shall meet, then," said Sultan Mahomed, "on the field of battle." "At all events," replied Macnaghten, "we shall meet at the day of judgment." And so the conference was brought to an end."

Then the Envoy sent them in writing a statement of the only terms on which he was prepared to treat. "I proposed to them," he wrote, "the only terms which, in my opinion, could be accepted with honour; but the temper of the rebels may best be understood when I mention that they returned me a letter of defiance the next morning, to the effect that unless I consented to surrender our arms and abandon his Majesty to his fate, we must prepare for immediate hostilities. To this I replied, that we preferred death to dishonour, and that

it would remain with a higher power to decide between us."*

Thus ended the first attempt to secure, by negotiation with the enemy, the safety of our discomfited troops. Whilst this movement was in progress a strange sight might have been seen on the ramparts of the British cantonment. Over those low walls, misnamed defences, the European soldiers were conversing with their Afghan enemies. The Afghans, armed to the teeth, came clustering round the cantonments; many of our soldiers went out unarmed amongst them, and were to be seen familiarly shaking hands with those whom a day before they had met on the field of battle. The Afghans were giving vegetables† to the men of the 44th Regiment, and declaring that everything had been amicably settled between the two contending hosts.

* *Unfinished Report of Sir W. H. Macnaghten to the Supreme Government—found in his writing-desk after his death: MS. Records.*

† Principally cabbages. It was apprehended by some that the broad

leaves might conceal bottles of spirit, wherewith it was designed to intoxicate the garrison previous to an attack on cantonment; but they proved on examination to be very harmless cabbages after all.

CHAPTER VI.

[November—December: 1841.]

Progress of Negotiation—Arrival of Mahomed Akbar Khan—His Character—Negotiations continued—Deaths of Meer Musjedee and Abdoollah Khan—Revival of Negotiations—The Draft Treaty.

A NEW actor now appeared upon the stage. The advent of Mahomed Akbar Khan had been for some time expected. He had arrived from Toorkistan early in October, and was known to have been hovering about Bameean, and seemingly watching the progress of events in the neighbourhood of the Afghan capital. How far he may have sown the seeds of insurrection among the Ghilzyes is not very clearly known, but it is probable that the influence he exercised at that time was rather of a passive than an active kind. That his presence on the borders of Afghanistan encouraged his countrymen in their career of hostility is not to be doubted; but there is little or no evidence to connect him more palpably with the earlier movements of the insurrectionary war. Whatever may have been his participation in the events of October and November, his appearance at the capital was now hailed by the insurgents with every demonstration of delight. Salutes were fired in honour of his arrival, and the chiefs waited upon him as upon one henceforth to be recognised

as their leader. He was known to be a man of high courage and energy; he had approved himself a good soldier in the field; and he was the favourite son of the old Barukzye ruler, who a year before had been condemned to pine away the remainder of his life a captive in the provinces of Hindostan.

The arrival of the Sirdar was a great event. Both parties looked upon it as one that must exercise a mighty influence over the future destinies of the war. The insurgents, wanting a leader, saw in the son of Dost Mahomed one around whom they could rally, with confidence alike in his sincerity and his courage. He had the wrongs of an injured family to redress. He had a kingdom to regain. He had been an outcast and a fugitive during two years of suffering and danger, because it had pleased the British Government to invade his father's dominions and to expel the *de facto* rulers of the country; and now he saw opening out before him a prospect of recovering the lost supremacy of the Barukzyes, and restoring his exiled father to the Balla Hissar. All the circumstances of his past life and his present position were such as to secure his loyalty to the national cause. His inner qualities, no less than his outer environments, were of a class to rivet his hostility to the British. He was a man of an eager, impetuous nature; susceptible of good and of bad impulses, but seldom otherwise than earnest and impulsive. His education had been neglected; in his youth he had been unrestrained, and now self-control—a virtue rarely exercised by an Afghan—was wholly foreign to the character of the man. He was, indeed, peculiarly demonstrative, and sudden in his demonstrations, passing rapidly from one mood to another—blown about by violent gusts of feeling, bitterly repenting to-day the excesses of yesterday, and rushing into new excesses to-morrow. His was one of those fiery

temperaments—those bold, dashing characters—which, in times of popular commotion, ever place their possessor in the front rank. But in seasons of repose he was one of the most joyous and light-hearted of men; no man loved a joke better; no man laughed more heartily, or seemed to look more cheerfully on the sunny side of life. They, who knew him before the British trode down the Barukzyes, spoke of him as a good-tempered, well-meaning young man, and little thought, when his large dark eyes were glowing with child-like eagerness, to have the full dimensions of his long spear introduced into his portrait; or his solid frame was shaking with laughter at some joke passed upon his uncomely *Meerza*, that he would soon become the chief actor in one of the bloodiest tragedies that has ever disgraced the history of the world.

Whilst the Afghans, with noisy demonstrations of delight, were welcoming the appearance of Akbar Khan, the British were slow to believe that his advent would deepen the embarrassments of their position. Early in November, Mohun Lal had suggested to Macnaghten the expediency of endeavouring to corrupt the Sirdar before his advance upon the capital; but the Envoy had received slightly the proposal, and no overtures had been made to the son of Dost Mahomed before his arrival at the capital. It was believed that there was sufficient security for his forbearance in the fact that his father and his brothers were prisoners in our hands; and in the game of negotiation, which was now to be carried on, it was calculated that the intervention of the Sirdar would facilitate rather than encumber our arrangements for the honourable evacuation of Afghanistan, and our safe return to the provinces which, in an evil hour, we had been so unhappily tempted to quit.

Akbar Khan appeared at Caubul; but he did not at

once assume the direction of affairs. The Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan, a cousin of the late Caubul chief, had been proclaimed King by the insurgents. All orders were sent forth in his name; and the "fatiha" was read for him in the mosques. He was a man of a humane and honourable nature, polished manners, and affable address. His nephew, Osman Khan, who is described by the Envoy as "the most moderate and sensible man" of the insurgent party, was now employed to negotiate with the British minister, and several times passed, on this errand, between the cantonment and the city. But the terms still dictated by the enemy were such as Macnaghten could not honourably accept. Day followed day; and nothing effectual was done either in counsel or on the field. The enemy appeared on the hills commanding cantonments and in the village of Beh-meru, now deserted and destroyed; and the guns in the British cantonments were playing all day long upon these points. But such distant interchanges produced no result; and in the mean while our provisions were rapidly dwindling down. Again starvation stared the garrison in the face. With laudable zeal and activity the commissariat officers exerted themselves to obtain grain from the surrounding country; but with equal zeal and activity the enemy were striving to frustrate their efforts. Akbar Khan himself had not been many days at Caubul before he began to see that to defeat our commissariat officers was to overcome our unhappy force. Threatening death to all who might be detected in supplying our troops with any description of food, he soon baffled the best efforts of Boyd and Johnson,* and again brought the question of capitulation to a simple question of supplies.

* "1st December, 1841.—For the last six days have been daily up before gun-fire, and at the fort of Khoja Meer Mahomed, in the hope of procuring some grain from them. He is the chief of the Beh-meru district. Notwithstanding my offers of the most handsome rewards to him, I cannot now prevail upon him or his people to give further aid. On going to his

But still sanguine and confident, whilst the clouds were gathering more and more thickly around him, Macnaghten saw the skies brightening over-head, and never doubted that before long the storm would roll itself away. The letters which he wrote at this time present a remarkable contrast to those written by General Elphinstone. Whilst the General was looking around him everywhere for whatever could be made to swell the mountain of difficulty and danger that he kept so steadily before him, the Envoy was constantly arraying in the foreground every circumstance that could in any way contribute towards the chance of ultimate success. Whilst the General was discovering that "our position was becoming more and more critical," the Envoy was perceiving that "our prospects were brightening," and talking about "defying the whole of Afghanistan." On the 28th of November, General Elphinstone wrote thus to Sir William Macnaghten:

November 28, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I am sorry to hear the persons expected last night did not come to Captain Trevor, and that the Hindoo merchant has

fort this morning (about 700 yards north of cantonments) I found merely two or three people inside, who told me that Mahomed Akbar Khan had yesterday come with a party and destroyed every house in it, and threatened death to the Khoja (who had fled) and his family in the event of his giving us further aid. Reported this to the Envoy, and told Sir William of our having but eight days' supply in store, and that all hopes of procuring more were at an end. I took the liberty of entreating that some decision might be come to as to our ultimate fate; that but *three* days more remained to consider of it; as in the event of our retreat to Jelalabad being determined on, we must carry with us *five* out of the *eight* days' supplies now in the godown. He replied

that he was glad I had spoken to him on the subject, as he felt convinced that, although we might possibly continue to go on from hand to mouth for a few days longer, it was impossible we could exist throughout the winter; 'but,' said he, 'let us wait two days longer, as something may turn up.' In the mean time, our cattle have been starving for some time past; not a blade of grass, nor a particle of *bhoosah*, nor grain procurable. The barley in store is served out as provisions to the camp-followers, who get a quarter of a seer (half a pound) for their daily food. Our cattle are subsisted on the twigs, branches, and bark of trees—scarcely an animal fit to carry a load."—
[Captain Johnson's Journal: MS. Records.]

failed with his promised supply of grain. I also hear that Khoja Meer has gone away. Is this the case? If so, our position is becoming more critical on the score of provisions. What effect do you think the death of Abdoolah Khan, if true, will have on our prospects? I shall send into the Balla Hissar to-morrow morning some things for the men, and ammunition; but our terrible want there is fuel. Major Ewart reports some men there to have died of cold, from which they are suffering much, and how that is to be remedied I don't see, as the trees near could afford, if obtained, but little relief, for I don't recollect many in the neighbourhood of the city, which I hear is supplied with trees (firewood) from Tezeen. In short, between ourselves, I see nothing we can do but by negotiation, if such be offered, and which for the many difficulties we are surrounded with, I hope may be the case. The camp-followers are bringing in wood from the village. There is nothing else to be had, I hear.

Yours,

W. K. E.

Very different from the tone of this desponding letter was the spirit which at this time animated the communications of the Envoy to Mohun Lal. But there are other points besides the sanguine temperament of Macnaghten which these letters serve to illustrate:

November 26, 1841. 4 P.M.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just now had the pleasure of receiving your notes of yesterday and this morning. Tell our friends that they need be under no alarm; that I should be in a hurry to trust what was arranged by Sultan Mahomed Khan was all nonsense, because I know that he is not a man to keep his word in anything. The intelligence you have sent me is very encouraging, and I hope the *nifac* among the rebels will increase. Meer Musjedec's death will probably cause the dispersion of the rebels who have come from Nijrow. Humza Khan never sent any relatives of the Ghilzye chiefs to me.

Yours,

W. H. M.

Tell everybody that I have no faith in Sultan Mahomed Khan, and that I only wished to try the sincerity of his employers.

November 29. 9 P.M.

MY DEAR SIR,

I enclose you a note from Captain Johnson. We are well off for everything but supplies, and, *Inshalla*, we shall not be badly off for them. If you can get any person to undertake to supply the grain, it should be put down in the ground lately occupied by Mr. Deane's fort. Pray do your utmost to effect this.

* * * * The enemy appeared to-day in considerable numbers, but they did nothing, and I am sure they will never venture to attack our cantonment. If we had only provisions, which, with due exertions ought to be obtained, we should be able to defy the whole of Afghanistan for any period. I am very sorry that the deputation from Humza did not make their appearance last night, and I am anxiously expecting accounts from you showing why they did not do so. * * * *

30TH, 9 P.M.—Your messenger has just arrived. I do not like to give 50,000 rupees without some security. Our prospects are, I think, brightening, and if you can assist us in the way of supplies, we have nothing to fear. * * * * I would give any money to Humza and the Ghilzyes if I had any security that they would be our friends, give us supplies, and keep open the communications.

W. H. M.

It will be gathered from these letters, that, before the end of November, Abdoollah Khan and Meer Musjedee had both been removed, by death, from the scene of their recent triumphs. General Elphinstone speaks of the death of the former; Sir William Macnaghten of the death of the latter. In the action of the 23rd of November, Abdoollah Khan had been carried wounded from the field of battle; but whether a shrapnel shot from Shelton's one gun, or a ball from an Afghan jezail, struck down the truculent chief, is a point of history which must ever remain, as now, enveloped in obscurity and doubt. The story runs, that one of the men who had been set upon the track of the doomed chiefs, declared that he shot down his victim from behind a wall; and promised that poison should complete the work which

the bullet had but partially effected. Abdoollah Khan died before a week had expired;* and it is said that Abdool Aziz claimed the price of blood. But Mohun Lal did not feel assured that either the traitorous bullet or the poison of the claimant had done the work of death; and the reward was refused on the plea that it had been offered for the heads of the chiefs, and the head of Abdoollah Khan had not been brought to him.

How Meer Musjedee died is not very clearly known.† His disappearance from the scene on which he had acted so conspicuous a part, was sudden and unexpected. A man named Mahomed Oollah swore that he had suffocated the chief in his sleep, and claimed the reward of his service. But the reward, it is said, was refused upon the same plea as was urged in the other case. The assassins, disappointed of their blood-money, were not likely to undertake any future service of the same hazardous kind, or to maintain a very discreet silence about the past. If they were employed upon such service, it is strange that their silence was not secured by a scrupulous fulfilment of the engagement by which their suborners had placed their own credit and safety in their hands. It was a perilous game, indeed, to invite disclosures by exciting the anger and hostility of the agents employed in this miserable work.

There is much obscurity still enveloping all this portion of the history of the war in Afghanistan. It is cer-

* It was generally believed in cantonments that he had died from the effects of his wounds. Lady Sale says: "Abdoollah Khan's death has, it is said, created some confusion in the city. Whilst still living a report was spread of his decease; and, like Alexander, he mounted his horse and showed himself to his followers; but the exertion was too great for him, and he shortly after expired."

† It was believed by the British that he had been poisoned. Lady Sale says: "Meer Musjedee is dead. Some say he has been poisoned; others, that he died in consequence of the wounds received last year in the Kohistan. A number of this chief's followers have gone off with the body to the Kohistan, there to attend his funeral obsequies."

tain that, at the end of November, Meer Musjedee and Abdoollah Khan died under circumstances which have been regarded, and not unreasonably, as suspicious. It is scarcely less certain that Lieutenant John Conolly, the cousin and assistant of the Envoy, instigated Mohun Lal to offer rewards for the heads of certain of the insurgent chiefs, and that Meer Musjedee and Abdoollah Khan were especially marked as the first victims. John Conolly was at this time with Shah Soojah in the Balla Hissar, and Mohun Lal was in the house of the Kuzzilbash chief. The Envoy was in cantonments. To what extent John Conolly acted under Macnaghten's instructions—whether he acted on his own authority, or was directed by Shah Soojah, is not very clearly known. That Conolly was in constant communication with the Envoy we have the authority of the latter for believing. "Throughout the rebellion," he wrote, in his official report, "I was in constant communication with the Shah through my assistant, Lieutenant J. B. Conolly, who was in attendance on his Majesty in the Balla Hissar." It has been questioned, therefore, whether Conolly, being at this time in constant communication with the Envoy, was likely, in a matter of so much responsibility, to have acted without instructions from his chief. But, on the other hand, we have Macnaghten's specific declaration in the following letter that it was never his object to encourage the assassination of the insurgents:

December 1, 1841.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry to find from your letter of last night that you should have supposed it was ever my object to encourage assassination. The rebels are very wicked men, but we must not take unlawful means to destroy them.

Mohamed Meerza Khan has not yet come near me. When he does, I shall be glad to advance him 5000 rupees out of the

50,000 which is to be given to him for Khidmut (service). . . . I had another overture this morning from Zemaun Khan's party, offering us a safe retreat to Peshawur; and they said that Khan Shereen was with them—the party being Jewan Khan, Jubbar Khan, Oosman Khan, Mahomed Akbar Khan, Ameen-oollah Khan, and Khan Shereen Khan. I suspect, from the insertion of the name of the last mentioned, that the whole thing is a fabrication. Let me know your opinion on this point. I replied to their overture by saying that I would not now do anything without the consent of his Majesty. * * *

Yours, &c. &c.,

W. H. M.*

In addition to this written declaration, we have the statement of Captain Skinner, to the effect that, when at a subsequent period the murder of Ameen-oollah was suggested to him by Akbar Khan, the Envoy shrank with abhorrence and disgust from the proposal, "assuring the ambassadors that, as a British functionary, nothing would induce him to pay a price for blood."†

Against the specific written declaration of the Envoy himself that it was never his object to encourage assassination, coupled with the evidence of Captain Skinner, to the effect that he revolted at the very suggestion, there is nothing but bare presumption to be opposed. If presumption is to carry weight with it, in so grave a discussion as this, it may fairly be presumed that a man of a nature so humane, and of instincts so honourable, would not have encouraged or sanctioned the foul trade of secret murder, and peremptorily denied his approval of measures which he had himself originated or supported. But, if he had been utterly destitute both of humanity and truth, it would still be incredible that, having en-

* *Unpublished Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.* Though the portions omitted are of no great historical importance, I have given the letter entire in the Appendix, that no suspicion might attach to the integrity of the document.

† *Answers of Captain Colin Mac-*

kenzie to Questions put by General Pollock: MS. Records. Captain Skinner was the only British officer who attended Macnaghten at this conference on the 22nd December. Captain Mackenzie says that he had the assurance from Captain Skinner himself.

couraged the assassination of the chiefs, he should have boldly denied it to the very man whom, directly or indirectly, he had employed to hire the assassins.*

On a question so grave and solemn as this, it is to be lamented that the judgment of the historian, after all conflicting evidence has been weighed and sifted, should be merely of an inferential character. The inference is, that whilst not wholly ignorant of the offers of head-money, which John Conolly, living with, and probably acting under the directions of Shah Soojah, was putting forth, through the agency of Mohun Lal, the Envoy neither suggested, nor actively encouraged, these "bloody instructions," on which such severe comments have been passed. It has been seen that he was prepared to offer rewards in the name of the King, for the apprehension of the principal rebels; and in the heat and excitement of active warfare, it is hardly probable that, if these men had been apprehended, their offences would have been subjected to a fair and impartial judicial inquiry. Macnaghten, indeed, stated that he would recommend his Majesty to "execute them." Such passive complicity as this, when all the circumstances by which Macnaghten was environed are fairly estimated, cannot be severely censured. We can only arrive at a just decision, in a case of so unprecedented a character as this, by weighing well all the difficulties which surrounded, all the responsibilities that weighed upon, and all the temptations that

* The charge of participation in these discreditable transactions is put forth, as already stated, in the *Calcutta Review*. It is, of course, the statement of an anonymous writer. But anonymous writers are not always unknown writers; and the article is supposed to have emanated from one to whom peculiar sources of information were open. The antecedent position of the supposed writer forbids us to question the genuineness of the letters attributed to John Conolly; but there

is no evidence before the public, and I have been unable to discover any in the course of my researches, to show that Macnaghten was implicated in the transactions to which those letters refer. On the other hand, there is, as I have shown, such evidence to acquit him of all complicity in these proceedings, as can only be set aside on the presumption that the Envoy was at once the most unscrupulous of liars, and the most egregious of fools.

beset the Envoy. If so surrounded, so weighed upon, so beset, he did not actively interfere to arrest the questionable measures of others, which seemed to offer some means of escape from the perils which hemmed in the British army—an army fearfully sacrificed by the feebleness of the military chiefs—I confess that I cannot see that he yielded more readily to temptation than other men of high honour would have done, begirt with such fiery trial.

But it is a relief to turn aside from the consideration of such a question, even to the record of the imbecility of our military leaders and the sufferings of our unhappy troops. —On the 1st of December there were supplies for eight days' diminished consumption in store. The camp-followers were receiving half a pound of barley a day. The cattle were without provender. It was necessary to keep them from absolute starvation by supplying them with the twigs, the lighter branches, and the bark of trees. Some small quantities of wheat were taken from the troops to feed the cattle used in the guns. In this conjuncture, Elphinstone, who met every difficulty more than half way, and who was not likely, therefore, to be silent at such a time as this, addressed the following letter to the Envoy:

1st December.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

We have already arrived, I regret to say, at one of our difficulties. Boosa for the cattle none can be had, and we have been obliged to-day to give the mountain-train yaboos some wheat to keep them alive. I hope, therefore, your negotiation may prosper, as circumstances are becoming extremely critical; little has been done in the way of purchase this morning. I don't wish to croak, but think it right that you should be kept constantly informed of the real state of things.

Yours,

W. K. E.

Sixty-five maunds is all that has been got in to-day; twelve maunds yesterday.

On the same day, Captain Johnson impressed upon the Envoy that there was no time to be lost—that if a retreat on Jellalabad were to be determined upon, it should be determined upon at once, as it would be necessary to take provisions for five days with the retreating force. The Envoy assented to this; but, ever eager to clutch at any hope, however slender, of deferring the dreadful day of surrender, he added, “Let us wait two days longer—something may turn up.”

The military authorities continued to press upon the Envoy, with oft-repeated urgent recommendations, for a speedy conclusion of a treaty with the enemy, enabling the British troops in safety to evacuate the country. But still the Envoy clung to the hope that something might be evolved in our favour; and delayed, in spite of their importunities from day to day, the dreadful hour of surrender. On the 5th of December the General wrote the following letter to the Envoy:

5th December.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

It becomes my duty to inform you that our stock of provisions is reduced to nine days, on half-rations; it therefore becomes imperative upon us to consider what can be done. We have, for the last few days, been disappointed in our expectation of getting any, and our hopes of success in doing this seem every day less. The objections to retreat on the Balla Hissar I have already stated; our wants there might be the same, with the additional one of fuel, and part of our ordnance for protection. Retreat without terms I think with you almost impossible, and that few would reach Jellalabad. The only alternative (as there now seems little chance of the Ghilzyes renewing the negotiation you were led to expect) is to try if terms can be made in any other quarter, if we do not hear something favorable to-morrow. With provisions we could hold out, but without them I do not see what can be done, or how we are to avert starvation. It is true the responsibility is great, and may fall on us; but are we justified in risking the safety of so many people when we can

no longer do anything? When reduced to the last extremity (where we now are almost), I think honourable terms better for our government than our being destroyed here, which, without food, is inevitable. All this I write in confidence for your own consideration, that you may think what is best to be done, as I have told our real situation.

Yours, truly,

W. K. E.*

On that day Macnaghten sent back only a brief, emphatic reply:

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I have received your note of this morning. I am perfectly aware of the state of our supplies; but as we have nine days' provision, and had only provisions for one or two days when the siege commenced, I conceive that we are better off now than we were a month ago. Whenever we go, we could not carry with us more than two or three days' supplies, and, therefore, it does not seem necessary to come to an immediate decision. But I will speak to you on the subject to-morrow, and will omit no favorable opportunity of negotiating.

W. H. M.†

On the following morning, the Envoy wrote more circumstantially to the General, in reply to the letter, urging him to obtain "honourable terms." He was not in a mood to think of terms at all. His voice was all for a movement into the Balla Hissar:

(Private.)

Cantonments, 6th Dec., 1841.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I now proceed to give you my opinion on your note of yesterday. There are three courses which may be said to be open to us. First, a retreat on Jellalabad, without terms. Secondly, a retreat to India, with terms, abandoning our position in this country. And, thirdly, to retire into the Balla Hissar. The first I regard as impracticable; and, if practicable, the adoption

* *Unpublished Correspondence of General Elphinstone.*

† *Unpublished Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.*

of such a measure would cover us with everlasting infamy, as we could not take the King's family along with us, and his Majesty would not stir without them. The second I regard as nearly equally impracticable, from the conflicting interests of the parties with whom we should have to treat. This cause would, I think, render any promised protection ineffectual, and, if this course could be safely adopted, the consequences would be terrific as regards the safety of our Indian Empire and our interests in Europe. The third course seems to me (though certainly attended with risk) to be by far the most safe and honourable which we could adopt. With four or five disposable regiments in the Balla Hissar, it would be strange if we could not obtain fuel and provisions; we should be in a position to overawe the city, and to encourage the Kuzzilbashes and our other well-wishers to come forward to our support; and we should probably find in the Balla Hissar provisions for a fortnight or a month. I would, therefore, lose no time in sending every night, by all possible contrivances, our stores, and sick, and wounded. Should the report of the advance of troops from Candahar prove correct (which we shall, in all probability, hear to-morrow), all our troubles will cease. Should we have reason to believe it unfounded, we can then commence destroying our powder and superfluous stores. In the mean time, I think we have daily proofs that the forces of our enemies are diminishing; and, with the blessing of Providence, some event may arise from their misunderstandings to relieve us from our present perilous position, even without the accession of fresh troops.

Very sincerely yours,
W. H. M.*

Then Macnaghten visited the General, and discussed with him long and earnestly the condition of the garrison and the measures to be taken for its extrication from the perils that beset it. If terms were not to be accepted from the enemy, it was necessary either to obtain provisions by force from some of the surrounding villages, or to march at once into the Balla Hissar. The Envoy suggested that a night attack might be made upon Deh-

* *Unpublished Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.*

Hadjee, or a similar enterprise undertaken against Killa Bolundee; but the General had no taste for night attacks or enterprises of any kind. Macnaghten went, and soon after his return home received the following letter:*

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

Since your departure, I have thought over, and given my utmost attention to, every part of the subject of our conversation. The first proposition was a night expedition against the Deh-Hadjee, said to be distant about three coss, part of the road through a narrow gorge, through which I now hear guns could not go; and I am also told that parties (of cavalry) have, for the last five or six days, been seen going in that direction: no doubt for the object of preventing our getting supplies. If we succeeded in taking the fort (if only one), we must hold it (to enable us to remove any quantity of grain with our means) for some time; during which, the enemy, hearing of our attack, would, no doubt, come out against our detachment; and from Captain Johnson's account, it is difficult to find grain. Another difficulty is our want of local knowledge (this may, perhaps, be obtained). These are the objections that present themselves to this plan.

With respect to a like enterprise on Killa Bolundee, that appears, I confess (and I would willingly grasp at anything to enable us to hold out), to be more difficult, from the facility with which a party might be cut off by a sortie from the city. The other alternative is the Balla Hissar; from thence seems the only chance we have of getting supplies; and as you now think our being able to make any terms is impossible, that seems the only one left. Colonel Chambers has been with me, and says his horses would be quite unequal to a forced march to Jellalabad, and that many of those of Anderson's regiment are unserviceable from want of food. Captain Anderson reported, this morning, one-half.

After leaving cantonments, terms, I should suppose, are quite out of the question; our quitting would be, I presume, con-

* There is some obscurity with respect to the date of this letter, but I believe I am right in stating that it was written on the 6th of December. As, however, the Envoy and the General were again in consultation two days afterwards on the same subject of an attack upon the grain villages, it may have been written on the 8th.

sidered as our total defeat; and, until reinforced, as we must sacrifice nearly all our cattle, we would not have the power of moving, for, without the means of transport, we would not go.

The next consideration is, whether our being annihilated here, or entering into honourable terms, would have the worst effect for our government. The responsibility is great for you and I; and (if we do not hear of the force from Candahar to-morrow) it only remains for us to consider whether we shall incur the responsibility, or risk the loss of this force; for, under the most favorable view we can take, the risk is great. Looking practically at the obstacles we have, they are in reality very difficult to surmount.

I submit all this for your consideration, and have sent Major Thain with this to you.

Yours, &c.,

W. K. E.

We must not think of treating, after any attempt either to retreat, or to the Balla Hissar, or if we fail in any attempt. We are now comparatively entire; a loss or failure would increase our destitution, and the terms will, of course, be worse. We could not expect anything else.

The General knew that his troops were not to be trusted. The Envoy knew this equally well; but, more jealous of the honour of his country, more hopeful and more courageous, he was unwilling to fling away a single chance which the wheel of time might throw up in his favour. In that great chapter of accidents, however, to which he so bravely turned, were written down only further disasters and degradations. On the 5th of December, the enemy, in open day, burnt the bridge which the English had thrown over the Caubul River, a quarter of a mile from cantonments. On the day after the calamitous action of the 23rd of November, the insurgents had begun to destroy it, and now they completed the work of destruction. They burnt it exultingly before the faces of our troops, who were lining the ramparts and looking idly on, as though there were no dishonour in endurance. The bridge

was of little use at that season of the year, for the stream was fordable—but it was a burning disgrace to the military authorities, that with 5000 British troops at their command, and with the ramparts of the cantonments bristling with guns, they should have suffered such an insult as this to be flung in their face.

The following day was one also of humiliation. Mahomed Sheriff's fort, which was garrisoned by a party of European and Native troops, was abandoned on the 6th of December. The enemy, a day or two before, had endeavoured to blow open the gate with powder-bags, but had not succeeded in the attempt. They might have spared themselves the trouble of the effort and the discredit of the failure. On the 6th of December, a very small party of the enemy, unperceived by the garrison, contrived to climb up the walls of the fort, from the direction of the King's garden. They had no sooner shown their heads at the window of the room where our men were sitting, than, both Europeans and natives, panic-struck and bewildered, escaped over the opposite wall, and, abandoning their bedding, arms, and ammunition, fled into cantonments.* The fort was soon filled with the enemy. Not an effort was made to recapture it.† The

* The garrison consisted of about 100 men, 40 being Europeans, under the command of Lieutenant Hawtreys, 37th N.I. Lady Sale says: "The Afghans planted their crooked sticks, which served them for scaling ladders; got up one by one; pulled out the mud (with which the window had been blocked up) and got in. A child with a stick might have repulsed them. The Europeans had their belts and accoutrements off, and the Sepoys the same. They all ran away as fast as they could! The 44th say that the 37th ran first, and as they were too weak they went too. Hawtreys says there was not a pin to

choose—all cowards alike. After he was deserted by the men, he himself threw six hand grenades before he followed them. . . . It was the most shameful of all the runaways that occurred."

† Lady Sale says that the 44th wished to wipe out the stain on the name, as did the Sepoys also (the 37th N.I.). Lieutenant Hawtreys's company volunteered to go with him and "take it without the assistance of any other troops." The General sent a message to the engineer officer (Lieutenant Sturt) asking if the fort was practicable and tenable—that is, whether our men could take it and

guns on the ramparts played upon it all day long, and before evening one of the bastions crumbled to pieces under our fire; but the British troops remained inactive in cantonments, submitting patiently to every new insult, as though disgrace, now become habitual, had ceased to be a burden to them.

Another blot was, at the same time, fixed upon the character of the unhappy troops. The 44th Queen's regiment had supplied the details of the guard for the protection of the cantonment bazaar. They were now withdrawn under circumstances little calculated to raise the reputation of the corps; and some companies of the 37th Native Infantry were sent to relieve them. The following letter on this subject, from the General to the Envoy, supplies a painful commentary on the state of the troops at this time :

Dec. 7, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

Three companies of the 37th have been ordered into the bazaar as a guard for it. Shelton wishes a support of the 44th outside. If they have any sense of shame left, they must do better, and their officers *must* exert themselves. S. is disposed to attribute the blame to the Sepoys—from all I hear, I fear unjustly; but this must be inquired into when we have time. I fear the enemy will not to-day give them an opportunity of retrieving their name.

W. K. E.

And now matters were at their worst. To what depths of humiliation our unhappy force had sunk, and with what indignation the Envoy regarded a state of things which he was powerless to avert or to remedy, the following letter, written about this time to Captain Macgregor, painfully declares :

hold it. Sturt's answer is worth will fight—tenable if they don't run
recording—"Practicable if the men away."

No date.

MY DEAR MACGREGOR,

I have received your notes of the 30th ultimo and 1st instant, and I am delighted at the good news they contain. I wish I could repay you in the same commodity, but I regret to say that everything in this quarter has been going wrong. Our troops were defeated in the field on the 23rd; our bridge has been burnt under our very noses; and the captured fort opposite the cantonment has been recaptured by the enemy without the slightest effort at resistance on our part. In short, our troops are behaving like a pack of despicable cowards, and there is no spirit or enterprise left amongst us. The military authorities want me to capitulate, but this I am anxious to put off to the last moment. In the mean time, we shall soon have to come to some decision, as we have only three days' provision for our troops, and nothing for our cattle. We are anxiously looking out for reinforcements from Candahar. We have rumours of their approach, but nothing as yet authentic. The rascals certainly contrive to intercept our communications most effectually. Tell Mackeson that I have got his official and private letters of the 20th ultimo, but that I am not in spirits to write, and I have really nothing to communicate in addition to what I have above written. John Conolly is with His Majesty in the Balla Hissar. The Sirkar is in a dreadful funk. The Laird of Pughman is almost the only man of respectability who has stuck by him. I have been striving in vain to sow *nifak* amongst the rebels, and it is perfectly wonderful how they hang together. Congratulate Mackeson for me on the gallant conduct of his namesake. *Inshalla!* his *Khidmut* will be *moojra*. Could you forward the enclosed to Erskine when you have an opportunity?

W. H. MACNAGHTEN.

On the morning of the 8th there were but four days' provision in store. The wretched camp-followers were living upon the carcasses of the camels which had been starved to death. The trees in cantonments had been stripped of all their bark and light branches to supply provender to the cattle, and were now all bare and useless. The Commissariat officers, Boyd and Johnson, wrote

a joint letter to the General, stating that, after much fruitless exertion, they had been compelled to adopt the opinion that provisions were no longer obtainable by purchase. But before this letter reached him the General had seen Captain Boyd, and had written to the Envoy declaring his opinion that it would be impossible to hold out longer :

Dec. 8, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

The commissary has just reported to me, that on examination of the grain he has in store, he finds, from the quantity of dirt mixed with it, he has not above four days' supplies left, at most. Under these circumstances, it becomes absolutely necessary for us to come to a decision as to our future measures, as I do not see how we are to hold out, without food for our Sepoys, beyond that time.

Yours truly,

W. K. E.

The letter of the Commissariat officers had not reached the General when the above was written. It ran in the following words :*

SIR,

In conformity with instructions received through you from Major-General Elphinstone, commanding in Afghanistan, we have the honour to report, from personal knowledge of the country to the north or north-east of cantonments, the utter impossibility of obtaining, either by force or otherwise, the smallest quantity of grain or forage of any kind within a distance of from three to four miles; and, further, that within this space the whole of the forts, with the exception perhaps of one or two, have been evacuated by the inhabitants, and more or less destroyed by the enemy.

With respect to that portion of your letter having reference to drawing two or three days' supplies from the Balla Hissar, we beg to bring to the Major-General's notice, that although our troops would, it is true, be subsisted for so many days longer,

* *Unpublished Correspondence.*

the delay of moving from the cantonments must prove destructive to our cattle, and cripple the only means we have of removing either our sick, treasure, or military stores, as the animals are even now in so weakly a state as to have scarcely stamina sufficient to carry a load any distance, and many are utterly incapable of rising with a load from the ground.

J. BOYD, Commissary General (Bengal Troops).

H. JOHNSON, Commissary General (Shah's Troops).

A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Envoy with the General's letter of the 9th of December.

Again Macnaghten and Elphinstone took counsel together, and again they parted to give their opinions the shape of official correspondence. Returned to his quarters, the Envoy wrote the following letter to the General :

8th Dec., 1841.

SIR,

With reference to the conversation I had the honour to hold with you this morning, I have to request that you will be so good as to state, for my information, whether or no I am right in considering it as your opinion that any further attempt to hold out against the enemy would merely have the effect of sacrificing both His Majesty and ourselves, and that the only alternative left is to negotiate for our safe retreat out of the country on the most favorable terms possible. I understood you to say to-day that all our cattle are starving, and that we have not more than three days' provision, half-rations, left for our men, whilst the difficulties of procuring more appear to you to be insurmountable.

It must be remembered that we hear rumours of the approach of reinforcements from Candahar, though nothing in an authentic shape has yet reached us on this subject.

W. H. MACNAGHTEN.

To this letter General Elphinstone sent back an answer, signed also by the three senior officers under his command—Brigadiers Shelton and Anquetil, and Colonel Chambers, who were that morning in council with their chief:

Caulbul, 8th Dec., 1841.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, requesting me to state, for your information, whether or not it be my opinion that any further attempt to hold out against the enemy would merely have the effect of sacrificing both His Majesty and ourselves, and that the only alternative left is to negotiate for our safe retreat out of the country on the most favourable terms possible.

In reply, I beg to state that my opinion is that the present situation of the troops here is such, from the want of provisions and the impracticability of procuring more, that no time ought to be lost in entering into negotiations for a safe retreat from the country.

As regards the troops at Candahar, and the rumours of their approach to our assistance, I should be sorry, in the absence of all authentic information, to risk the sacrifice of the troops here by waiting for their arrival, when we are ignorant even of their having commenced their march, and are reduced to three days' supply of provision for our Sepoys at half-rations, and almost entirely without forage for our horses and cattle.

Our number of sick and wounded in hospital exceeds 600, and our means for their transport is far from adequate, owing to the death by starvation of so many of our camels; from the same cause also we shall be obliged at this inclement season to leave the tents and bedding behind with such a march before us.

As regards the King, I must be excused entering upon that point of your letter, and leave its consideration to your better judgment and knowledge; but I may be allowed to say that it little becomes me, as commanding the British troops in Afghanistan, to regard the necessity of negotiating in any other light than as concerns their honour or welfare, both of which I should be answerable for by a further stay here, after the sudden and universal rebellion which has taken place throughout the dominions.

The whole of the grain and forage in our vicinity is exhausted, and the defence of this extensive and ill-situated cantonment will not admit of distant expeditions to obtain supplies from the strongly-fortified dwellings of an armed and hostile population, our present numbers being insufficient for its defence, and

obliging the whole of the troops to be almost constantly under arms.

In conclusion, I can only repeat my opinion that you should lose no time in entering into negotiations.

W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-Gen.,
Commanding in Afghanistan.

I concur in the above opinions.

J. SHELTON, Brigadier.

In a military point of view, I concur in the above.

W. ANQUETIL, Brigadier,
Commanding Shah Soojah's Forces.

I also concur.

R. CHAMBERS, Lieut.-Col.,
Commanding Cavalry.

Still shrinking from the dreadful thought of surrender, Macnaghten, soon after the receipt of this letter, went over to the General's quarters, and wrung from him a reluctant promise to make one more attempt to secure supplies by an expedition against one of the forts or villages in which they were known to be stored. A council of war was held that evening at the General's quarters. The Envoy was present at the meeting. The Commissariat officers were also in attendance. There was a long and stormy discussion. At length it was determined that on the following morning a detachment of infantry and cavalry, with a gun, should be despatched, accompanied by Captain Johnson, to the village of Khoja Rewash, some four miles from cantonments, where it was believed that a considerable supply of grain was stored. The village was to be surprised before daybreak. The inhabitants were to be called upon to sell their grain; and, in the event of their acquiescence, Captain Johnson was to purchase it; but in the event of their refusal, the village was to be carried by assault, and the grain taken by force. The detachment was to start at two o'clock, and, that there might be no delay in the departure of the force,

every preparation was to be made before that hour, and the troops under arms for an immediate march.

The appointed hour arrived. Captain Johnson was ready to accompany the detachment. The troops were under arms; but no preparations had been made for their departure. A bridge was to have been laid down for the passage of the cavalry and artillery, and covered with straw, that no noise might be made to rouse the suspicions of the enemy; but at two o'clock no orders had been issued, and it was evident that there were doubts and embarrassments to impede the progress of the expedition. Something was wrong, and it became known at last that the enterprise was discovered to be a dangerous one. The enemy were in force in the dilapidated village of Beh-meru, and so, just as day began to dawn, the enterprise was altogether abandoned.

In the course of the day intelligence of a cheering character was received from Jellalabad. Sale's little garrison had sallied out and gallantly defeated the enemy. It was hoped by the Envoy and a few others, who were turning their eyes in every direction, straining to catch even the faintest ray of hope, that the improved aspect of affairs at Jellalabad would induce the military authorities to make new efforts to maintain their position. But all hope of this kind was soon dissipated. The General, fearful of the encouragement of such expectations, addressed the following letter to the Envoy :

Caulul, 9th Dec.

SIR,

With reference to my letter of yesterday's date, No. 215, I beg to state that the intelligence received this day from Sir R. Sale does not, in my opinion, after the most mature consideration, so improve our situation as to alter the sentiments I therein expressed as to the necessity of a treaty being entered into, if possible, with the enemy; but I look upon the arrival of this account of the success obtained over the rebels on the 1st

inst. as most opportune, for I consider it cannot but prove highly advantageous in our negotiations. I beg to annex a copy of a letter from the two officers at the head of the Commissariat Department, by which you will see our destitute state, and the little hope there is of obtaining further supplies.

W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-Gen.

The General could only see in the cheering news from Jellalabad another reason for entering into negotiations with the enemy.

All this time the Envoy had been anxiously looking for tidings of the advance of the force under Colonel Maclaren, which had been despatched from Candahar. The communications with that place had been so completely cut off, that it was not until the 10th of December that Macnaghten received intelligence from Colonel Palmer, who commanded the garrison at Ghuznee, that there was little prospect of Maclaren's brigade making good its march to Caubul. The inclemency of the weather and the loss of baggage cattle had been so great, that Maclaren, struggling on with difficulty, was dreading the necessity of a retrograde move. The Envoy had been eager to hold out so long as the least hope remained of receiving succour from the westward. That hope was now rapidly waning. The provisions in cantonments were almost wholly exhausted. On the morning of the 11th there was just food enough for the day's consumption of the fighting men. The camp-followers were starving. Food was not to be obtained by purchase, for the villagers would not sell; food was not to be obtained by fighting, for the soldiers would not fight. Macnaghten had urged the nobler course, until repeated disappointments had made him despair of military success. There was now, indeed, nothing left him but to negotiate with the enemy, or to suffer the force in cantonments to perish by the slow process of starvation before his face. He had suggested

every other course to no purpose. He had resisted the importunities of the military authorities, clamouring for surrender, until there were no provisions in store for the morrow, and no hope of replenishing our empty granaries. He could not now any longer resist; so he drew out the rough draft of a treaty, and met the Afghan chiefs in conference.

The meeting took place at the distance of about a mile from the cantonments, on the banks of the Caubul river. Captains Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie accompanied the Envoy, with a few troopers of the body-guard as an escort. The chiefs of all the principal tribes in the country were present. Among the leading men assembled were Mahomed Akbar Khan, Oosman Khan, Sultan Mahomed Khan, Mahomed Sheriff, Mahomed Shah Khan, and Khoda Buksh Khan, Ghilzye. The first salutations over, the Envoy drew forth the draft treaty he had prepared, and read in Persian the following articles, with their preamble, to the assembled chiefs :

Whereas it has become apparent from recent events that the continuance of the British army in Afghanistan for the support of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk is displeasing to the great majority of the Afghan nation; and whereas the British Government had no other object in sending troops to this country than the integrity, happiness, and welfare of the Afghans, and, therefore, it can have no wish to remain when that object is defeated by its presence; the following conditions have been agreed upon between Sir W. H. Macnaghten, Bart., Envoy and Minister at the Court of Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk for the British Government on the one part, and by Sirdar [] for the Afghan nation on the other part.

1st. The British troops now at Caubul will repair to Peshawur with all practicable expedition, and thence return to India.

2nd. The Sirdars engage that the British troops shall be unmolested in their journey, shall be treated with all honour, and receive all possible assistance in carriage and provisions.

3rd. The troops now at Jellalabad shall receive orders to retire

to Peshawur so soon as the envoy-and-minister is satisfied that their progress will be uninterrupted.

4th. The troops now at Ghuznee will follow, *vid* Caubul, to Peshawur, as soon as arrangements can be made for their journey in safety.

5th. The troops now at Candahar, or elsewhere within the limits of Afghanistan, will return to India, either *vid* Caubul or the Bolan Pass, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made, and the season admits of marching.

6th. The stores and property of whatever description formerly belonging to Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan will be restored.

7th. All property belonging to British officers which may be left behind in Afghanistan will be carefully preserved and sent to India, as opportunities may offer.

8th. Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk will be allowed either to remain in Afghanistan on a suitable provision for his maintenance, not being under one lakh of rupees per annum, or to accompany the British troops on their return to India.

9th. All attention and respect will be paid to such of the Shah's family as may be unable to accompany him, and they shall be permitted to occupy their present place of residence in the Balla Hissar until their return to India, should the Shah resolve in accompanying the British troops.

10th. On the safe arrival of the British troops at Peshawur, arrangements will be immediately made for the return to Afghanistan of the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, his family, and all other Afghans detained in India.

11th. So soon as the Ameer with his family shall reach Peshawur, on their return to Caubul, the family of the Shah shall be allowed to return towards India.

12th. For the due fulfilment of the above conditions four respectable British officers will be left in Caubul as hostages, and will be allowed to return to India on the arrival of the Ameer and his family at Peshawur.

13th. Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan, Sirdar Mahomed Oosman Khan, and such other chiefs of influence as may be so disposed, will accompany the British troops to Peshawur.

14th. Notwithstanding the retirement of the British troops from Afghanistan, there will always be friendship between that

nation and the English, so much so that the Afghans will contract no alliance with any other foreign power without the consent of the English, for whose assistance they will look in the hour of need.

15th. Should it hereafter be the desire of the Afghan nation and the British Government to consent thereto, a British Resident at Caubul may be appointed to keep up the friendly communication between the two governments, but without interfering in any way with the internal administration of Afghanistan.

16th. No one is to be molested on account of any part he may have taken in the late contest; and any person desirous of going to India with the British troops shall be permitted to do so.

17th. From the date on which these articles are agreed, the Sirdars above named undertake that the British troops shall be supplied with provisions on rendering payment for the same.

18th. All British officers and troops who may be unable, from any cause, to quit Afghanistan immediately, shall be treated with all honour and respect, and receive every assistance until the state of the season and of their preparations admits of their departure.

When the Envoy came to the end of the second article, Akbar Khan, with characteristic impetuosity, interrupted him, saying that there was no need to furnish our force with supplies, as there was no impediment to their marching on the morrow. The other chiefs rebuked him for this interference. The remainder of the treaty was read without any further uncourteous interruptions; and, this ebullition over, the young Barukzye himself subsided into courtesy and repose.*

The conference lasted two hours. The terms of the treaty were discussed with as much calmness and moderation as could have been expected, and its main stipulations were agreed to by the assembled chiefs. It was resolved that the British troops should evacuate their cantonments within three days, and that the chiefs

* It is said that Akbar Khan proposed to seize the Envoy at this meeting, but that the other chiefs were adverse to the proceeding. I do not know whether this story rests upon good authority.

should, in the mean while, send in provisions for their use. The meeting broke up, and Captain Trevor accompanied the Khans to the city, "as a hostage for the sincerity of the Envoy."

It is scarcely necessary to write anything in vindication of the conduct of Macnaghten with respect to this early treaty. His vindication is to be found in the preceding correspondence with the military chiefs. But a few pregnant sentences, in which he has himself recorded the circumstances under which he was at last induced to throw himself upon the forbearance of the enemy, ought to be laid before the reader, embodying as they do the Envoy's own justification of his conduct. "The whole country," he wrote in his unfinished report, "as far as we could learn, had risen in rebellion; our communications on all sides were cut off; almost every public officer, whether paid by ourselves or his Majesty, had declared for the new governor, and by far the greater number even of his Majesty's domestic servants had deserted him. We had been fighting forty days against very superior numbers, under most disadvantageous circumstances, with a deplorable loss of valuable lives, and in a day or two we must have perished from hunger, to say nothing of the advanced season of the year and the extreme cold, from the effects of which our native troops were suffering severely. I had been repeatedly apprised by the military authorities that nothing could be done with our troops; and I regret to add that desertions to the enemy were becoming of frequent occurrence among our troops. The terms I secured were the best obtainable, and the destruction of fifteen thousand human beings would little have benefited our country, whilst our government would have been almost compelled to avenge our fate at whatever cost. We shall part with the Afghans as friends, and I feel satisfied that any govern-

ment which may be established hereafter will always be disposed to cultivate a good understanding with us. A retreat without terms would have been impracticable. It is true, that by entering into terms, we are prevented from undertaking the conquest of the entire country—a measure which, from my knowledge of the views of government, I feel convinced would never be resorted to even were the means at hand. But such a project, in the present state of our Indian finances, and the requisitions for troops in various quarters, I knew could not be entertained.”*

I wish that it were not more difficult to acquit the military chiefs. General Elphinstone's correspondence contains what he conceived to be a justification of his conduct in urging Macnaghten to capitulate. Brigadier Shelton has left upon record a statement of which it is only just to his memory that it should have the full credit: “The great extent of cantonments,” he wrote in the narrative drawn up by him at Buddeeabad, “and defenceless nature of the ramparts (an officer having actually ridden over them), effectually compromised our force, by the necessity to watch and protect every foot of the works, from their extreme weakness, and the consequent danger of sending out a force of sufficient strength to ensure victory, against a numerous enemy flushed with success, while our troops were disheartened, on half-rations of parched wheat, and harassed and worn out from constant duty on the ramparts, whose weakness required their presence night and day, exposed to excessive cold by night, with little covering and less comfort. The great oversight of neglecting to bring in provisions for the winter could not be remedied. The impossibility of procuring them by force in a country studded with forts, every one of which required a regular attack, was appa-

* *Unfinished Report of Sir W. H. Macnaghten: MS. Records.*

rent to all. The Ricka-bashee Fort, close to cantonments, cost us 200 men. What must distant ones not have cost us—sniped the whole way out and home by long rifles out of range of our fire, through snow, with the thermometer at zero? There was nothing under such circumstances dishonourable in a necessary retreat, which might have been effected before the snow fell, and whilst there were a few days' provisions in store, with some hope of success. Had provisions been stored in cantonments for the winter, the troops would have been in better heart, and resistance made until timely assistance should arrive. The party at Jellalabad was more favoured, both in provisions and a more congenial climate."

Posterity will not accept such apologies as these. That difficulties and dangers of no common kind beset the path of the military commanders in those Caubul cantonments is not to be gainsaid. But war is made of difficulties and dangers. It is the glory of the soldier to live in the midst of them. Elphinstone and Shelton were sent to Caubul to face difficulties and dangers, not to turn away from them. The existence of the evils here set forth in such formidable array is not questioned or doubted. Some, at least, of them were the growth of our own weakness; for difficulties not met with energy and decision are wonderfully reproductive. They thicken around the wavering and irresolute. If, on the 10th of December, Elphinstone and Shelton, after bravely struggling, throughout six long peril-laden weeks, against the difficulties which were thronging around them, had at last succumbed to their pressure, they would have been entitled to the respect, no less than to the pity, of the world. But it was not so much that the circumstances were strong, as that the men were weak. As early as the 5th of November—three days after the first outbreak of the insurrection—Elphinstone

had begun to think and to write about terms. Shelton was not much behind him in his recommendations of the same ignoble course. They were, both of them, brave men. In any other situation, though the physical infirmities of the one, and the cankered vanity, the dogmatical perverseness of the other, might have, in some measure, detracted from their efficiency as military commanders, I believe that they would have exhibited sufficient constancy and courage to rescue an army from utter destruction, and the British name from indelible reproach. But in the Caubul cantonments they were miserably out of place. They seem to have been sent there, by superhuman intervention, to work out the utter ruin and prostration of an unholy policy by ordinary human means.

It is remarkable, indeed, that the chief conduct of our military operations, in this critical conjuncture, should have been in the hands of two men so utterly unlike each other, and yet so equal in their incapacity for such command. I believe it to be no exaggeration to affirm, that there were not in India two men of the same high rank equally unfitted by circumstance and by character for the command of the Caubul army. The one had everything to learn; the other had everything to unlearn. Elphinstone knew nothing of the native army. Shelton was violently prejudiced against it. Elphinstone, in a new and untried position, had no opinion of his own, but flung himself upon the judgment of any one with confidence enough to form and express one. Shelton, on the other hand, was proud of his experience, and obstinately wedded to his own opinions. Opposition irritated and enfeebled him. To overrule and to thwart him at the commencement of an enterprise entrusted to his charge was to secure its ignominious failure. Whether by accident or by design, he generally con-

trived to demonstrate the soundness of his own judgment, by being disastrously beaten in every attempt to carry out the projects forced upon him by the preponderating counsels of others. Had Shelton exercised the chief military control, though he might have committed some errors, he would probably have distinguished himself more than in the secondary position which he was compelled to occupy. On him was thrown the burden of the executive duties. Whilst others overruled his opinions, he was made responsible for the success of enterprises against which he protested, and with which he was the last man in the country heartily to identify himself under circumstances so irritating and depressing. It would have been impossible, indeed, to have brought together two men so individually disqualified for their positions—so inefficient in themselves, and so doubly inefficient in combination. Each made the other worse. The only point on which they agreed was, unhappily, the one on which it would have been well if they had differed. They agreed in urging the Envoy to capitulate. There was a curse upon them that clouded their brains and made faint their hearts, and moved them to seek safety in a course at once the most discreditable and the most perilous of all that opened out before them.

CHAPTER VII.

[December, 1841.]

Preparations for the Retreat—Evacuation of the Balla Hissar—Progress of the Negotiations—Continued Delay—Variations of the Treaty—Designs of the Envoy—Overtures of Mahomed Akbar Khan—Death of Sir William Macnaghten—His Character.

AND now began preparations for the retreat. Orders were despatched to the Balla Hissar for the evacuation of that position by the British troops; and it was said that in two days the whole force would be moving towards the British provinces. Doubtful of our good faith, the chiefs withheld the promised supplies; but small quantities of grain were procured from the Balla Hissar. In the mean while, though our commissariat store-rooms were empty, our military magazines were full.* There was a scramble among the soldiers for new arms and accoutrements; and even the camp-followers, to whom ammunition was served out by orders of the General, came in for a share of the spoil.

The Balla Hissar was evacuated by the British troops on the 13th of December. Akbar Khan had pledged

* The General had announced (ante, page 37), as early as the 6th of November, that his ammunition was failing him; but on the 13th of December the magazine was so well supplied that he ordered it to be served out to the camp-followers. The Balla Hissar had in the mean while been liberally furnished from cantonments.

himself to conduct the party safely to cantonments. Grain was of unspeakable value at this time; but time was valuable too. In our efforts to save the former we lost the latter. There were 1600 maunds of wheat to be conveyed to cantonments, and the packing and loading were more than a day's work. Great as had been the exertions of the Commissariat officer, and worthy of all praise, Major Ewart was compelled to break in upon his labours, and move off his force, before the baggage-cattle were ready to start with their precious loads. It was six o'clock in mid-winter, very dark, and bitterly cold, when the troops began to march slowly out of the Balla Hissar. Akbar Khan and his followers had been for some time in readiness to escort them to cantonments; and now it was whispered among the King's people that a trap had been laid for the destruction of the force, and that not a man would reach his destination. Major Ewart moved out his men; and the party had scarcely cleared the gate when a rush, it was said, was made by some of Akbar Khan's jezailchees to obtain admittance to the Balla Hissar. The gates were immediately closed; the King's troops on the walls opened a smart fire of musketry on friends and on foes alike. Then followed a shower of grape, striking down some of our Sepoys, and creating no little dismay and confusion in our ranks.

The Seeah-Sungh hills, along the base of which lay the road between the Balla Hissar and the cantonments, were bristling with Ghilzye banditti. At that late hour, Akbar Khan declared that it would be almost impossible to restrain them, and that therefore, if the British force would secure its safety, it must abstain from prosecuting its march towards cantonments until he had made arrangements with the chiefs—in fact, that it must halt till the morrow. On that dark, frosty December night this was,

indeed, a discouraging announcement. The troops were halted on low marshy ground, under the walls of the fort. The ground was white with the hoar frost. The air was biting cold. They would have lit fires and clustered around them, but there was no fuel in their reach. They had no tents. They had no bedding. They had no food. They were every minute expecting to be attacked by the enemy. In this cheerless, miserable state they could do nothing but stand, or walk about, looking for the rising of the morning star.* The night was a long one, but it came to a close at last. The miseries of the darkness were now to be succeeded by the perils of the dawn. They were only about six hundred strong, and the road was infested by thousands of the enemy. They had nothing on which to depend but the good faith of Akbar Khan and their own steadiness and courage. Happily the former did not fail them. Akbar Khan did not play the traitor. The rear guard was molested by a party of Afghans, and the Sirdar himself, with a few followers, galloped into the midst of his hostile countrymen, and threatened to cut down all who dared to oppose the progress of the detachment. About ten o'clock the force reached cantonments in safety; but "thoroughly exhausted with hunger and fatigue."†

It has been stated, that when on the evening of the 13th of December the British troops moved out of the Balla Hissar, an attempt was made by some of the followers of Akbar Khan to obtain admittance. It has been said that it was the Sirdar's object to seize the gate, so as to admit the main body of his followers, and to carry the place by storm. It has been surmised, also, that the Sirdar delayed the march of Major Ewart's detachment, hoping

* At the suggestion of Lieutenant son, who had been ordered by the Conolly they endeavoured to obtain King to admit no one.
 re-admittance to the Balla Hissar, † *Narrative of Lieutenant Melville.*
 but were fired upon by the garri-

that the gates of the Balla Hissar would be re-opened to the British troops; and that then, under cover of the night, his followers might force an entrance into the place.* A very different account of this incident, however, has been left on record by the Envoy himself. "On the 13th of December," he wrote, "it was agreed upon that our troops should evacuate the Balla Hissar, and return to the cantonment, whilst the Barukzyes should have a conference with his Majesty, with a view to his retaining the nominal powers of sovereignty, they, for their own security, placing a guard of their own in the upper citadel. No sooner, however, had our troops left the Balla Hissar, than his Majesty, owing to some panic or misunderstanding, ordered the gate to be shut, and the proposed conference was thereby prevented. So offended were the Barukzyes, that they determined never to offer his Majesty the same terms again. In explanation of his conduct, his Majesty states that the party whom the Barukzyes desired to introduce was not the party which had been agreed upon."† This was, probably, one of the last sentences ever penned by Sir William Macnaghten. It closes the fragment of the official report found in his writing-desk after his death.

The treaty read by the Envoy at the conference on the 11th of December contained an article involving the formal abdication of Shah Soojah. The restoration of the Barukzye Sirdars to their old principalities was, at that time, decreed by both contracting parties; but the meeting had scarcely broken up, when some of the Douranee chiefs, jealous of the power of the Barukzyes, which had ever been put forth to the injury and depression of the tribes, recoiled from this perilous stipulation, and began to think of the retention of the King, at all

* *Eyre's Journal.*

† *MS. Records.*

events as a puppet and a name.* On the following day it was proposed by the chiefs that Shah Soojah should remain on the throne, on condition of his intermarrying his daughters with the leading Afghan Sirdars, and vesting the Wuzeership in the family of the Barukzyes. It was stipulated also that the King, whose love of pomp and ceremony was one of his besetting infirmities, and who had excited the indignation of many of the chiefs by his haughty bearing towards them, should dispense with some of the regal formalities which had given them so great offence.† The proposal, sanctioned by the British minister, was formally made to the Shah. There was the loss of his kingdom on the one side; there was the loss of some regal dignity on the other. The King hesitated; then yielded a reluctant assent; and a few days afterwards withdrew it altogether. His pride and his fear both deterred him from forming such an alliance with the chiefs. He was unwilling so to sully the purity of the royal blood; and he could not trust to the good faith of the Sirdars after the departure of his British allies. And so the treaty with the Barukzye chiefs reverted to its original shape, and the Shah determined to return to the British provinces, from which he had never yet emerged without plunging into new disasters.

The stipulations of the treaty were now to be brought into effect. But mutual distrust existed between the parties, and each was unwilling to give the other any advantage by being the first to act up to the obligations

* Mohun Lal says that this was the Envoy's design. "This agreement," he wrote in a letter to Mr. Colvin, "which the Envoy had prudently made to create dissension, disappointed all the Douranee rebels, &c., who were alarmed at the return of the Dost. They immediately began to communicate with the Shah, and

assured him to take his side, which, in fact, was the object of the Envoy." —[*MS. Records.*]

† Mainly "the offensive practice of keeping the chief nobles of his kingdom waiting for hours at his gate, in expectation of audience." —[*Eyre's Journal.*]

that it imposed. The British authorities called upon the chiefs to send in the provisions which they had undertaken to provide; and the chiefs called upon the British authorities to demonstrate the sincerity of their promises to retire from Afghanistan, by giving up the different forts which they occupied in the neighbourhood of cantonments, and by placing hostages in their hands. The question of the abandonment of the forts was discussed between the Envoy and the General. On the 16th of December the latter wrote:

Dec. 16, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I wish you would write me an official letter, with your opinion as to the necessity of giving up the forts, in furtherance of your negotiations. I think, if absolutely necessary, it must be done. Our situation cannot be made worse, but I think they ought to take them one at a time, beginning with Zoolfikar's (the grain fort) and the Ricka-Bashee, they sending us supplies. This will be a mutual proof of confidence: the abandoning of these forts if they are not sincere, giving up these cantonments and the possibility of retreat from them. Of *course* the hostages will be sent, as you think they ought to be: pray name them in your letter, if they have offered, or you proposed any.

I herewith return the two letters from Trevor and Captain Drummond.

Yours truly,

W. K. E.*

The magazine fort is, in fact, part of our cantonments, and ought for the present to be dispensed with, as an act of courtesy and faith to us.

Upon the receipt of this letter from the General, the Envoy addressed to him the required official communication:

December 16, 1841.

SIR,

I have the honour to acquaint you that I have received a proposition from Mahomed Oosman Khan and Ameen-oollah

* *Unpublished Correspondence.*

Khan, to the effect that we should give up to them certain forts in the vicinity of the cantonments, with a view to convince the population of the sincerity of our intention to leave the country; by which arrangement also they stated that they would be able to supply us punctually with provisions.

I am aware of the objections to such an arrangement, in a military point of view; but as I am of opinion that the proposition has emanated from a suspicion of our intentions, rather than from any sinister motive on the part of the Afghan chiefs, I would strongly recommend that the proposition be complied with. We are clearly completely in the power of our new allies as regards the article of provisions; and it is not clear to me what other course than compliance is open to us. By this course we show confidence, and have at least the chance of making a safe and honourable retreat out of the country: whereas, by refusal, we may exasperate those with whom we are treating, and be utterly cut off from the means of subsistence.

Since the above was written, I have received an intimation that no further supplies will be sent us, until the proposition of the chiefs be complied with; and I request that you will inform me whether you are prepared to give up the forts

(The new Magazine Fort,
The Musjeed,
The Fort of Zoolfikar,
The Fort of Ricka-Bashee)

this afternoon.

The chiefs have promised that thirty men, who shall be under control, are to occupy each of the places to be delivered up; and I hope that the brother of Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan will reside in the cantonment as a hostage until our departure.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c.,

W. H. M.*

To this letter the General sent back the following official reply:

Head-Quarters, Caubul, Dec. 16, 1841.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date; in reply to which I beg to say that,

* *Unpublished Correspondence.*

from the emergency of the case, as therein stated, I see no alternative left us but to give up the forts mentioned to the chiefs with whom you are treating; and I shall accordingly give orders for their being vacated and delivered over to the persons who may be authorised to receive them, immediately on your intimating their arrival.

I have the honour, &c.,

W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-Gen.,
Commanding in Afghanistan.

No time was lost in carrying this arrangement into effect. Whatever dilatoriness may have been displayed on other occasions, there was no want of alacrity evinced when anything was to be yielded to the enemy. Our garrisons were speedily withdrawn from the forts, and the victorious insurgents duly placed in possession of them. By four o'clock in the afternoon, the Afghan conquerors were sitting on the walls of these ceded forts, looking into the British cantonments, and joking over our discomfiture.* A brother of the Newab Zemaun Khan was sent in as a hostage on the part of the enemy;† and a small supply of atta was furnished to the troops.

Provisions, however, came in very slowly; and carriage was not sent in at all. There was a mixed crowd of robbers and fanatics swarming between the city and the cantonments, ever on the alert to intercept the supplies that were sent in either by the Sirdars or by private speculators. All kinds of outrages were com-

* Shelton was opposed to the cession of the forts. "On my opinion being asked," he says, "I pronounced it injudicious, and it was declined; but about two days afterwards the order was given, and I was directed to give up all."—[*MS. Records.*]

† It was thought, however, that there was too much disunion among

the Afghans, at this time, to render the hostage-giving any kind of security—inasmuch as the sacrifice of a hostage might have pleased more than it offended. It was said by Sultan Jan, of the hostage now in our camp, "Oh! he is a dog of a man; what should we have cared if you had killed him."—[*Lieut. Melville's Narrative.*]

mitted, in the very face of our guards, and under the very muzzles of our guns; but not a shot was fired upon the plunderers. Our enemies, now become "our new allies," were to be treated with all possible consideration. Nothing was to be done to interrupt the good feeling which was now said to have been established; and so, whilst our troops were starving, the military authorities suffered the grain so eagerly looked for by the wretched force to be swept away from them, under the very walls of cantonments, by a miserable rabble, whom a few rounds of grape would have scattered like a flock of sheep.*

* Captain Johnson's journal supplies the best information extant relative to the measures taken throughout the siege to supply the force with provisions. Under dates *Dec. 12th and 13th*, he writes: "A few provisions sent into cantonments by the Sirdars. A lakh of rupees advanced to Mahomed Akbar for the purchase of camels—not one as yet forthcoming. The Secah-Sungh gateway, through which all supplies come in, is daily infested by parties of Afghans calling themselves *Ghassees*, or fighters for religion. They are, without exception, the most barefaced, impertinent scoundrels under the sun. Armed with swords, daggers, and matchlocks, they acknowledge no chief, but act independently—they taunt and insult the whole of us. Not a Sepoy can venture twelve paces from the bridge over the ditch without being plundered of what he has. People from the town, bringing in grain or *boosah* (bran), are often plundered and beaten. Although our cattle and men are starving, no measures are taken by our military authorities to check all this. It is true, our ramparts are lined with our soldiers, and plenty of cannon at each bastion, and a six-pounder at the bridge loaded with grape—but to what purpose? Our men are told, on no account, to fire upon the Af-

ghans, without the most urgent necessity, for fear of putting a stop to the good feeling existing on their part. The chiefs have been applied to, to use their influence to prevent these people assembling near our cantonments. Their reply is, 'We cannot do so—they are not under our control; but if they misbehave themselves, fire upon them.' To-day, I was at the Secah-Sungh gateway, anxiously looking out for some food for my public cattle. About thirty loads of *boosah* came to within six paces of the bridge, and where the guard was standing. The officer on duty, as also the field-officer of the week, was there. The wretched rabble above alluded to stopped the drivers of the donkeys and abused them, beat them and ordered them back, and threatened them with more ill-usage in the event of their returning to sell any article to the Feringhees. This was reported by me to the General, and there it ended."

And again, on the 15th, the active Commissariat officer writes: "A few supplies sent into cantonments, and people still bringing in private speculations; but are subjected to the same ill-treatment as noticed on the 12th and 13th. Attah and barley sell from 14 to 3 and 4 seers the rupee (from 3lb. to 6lb. and 8lb. for 2s.) . . . To-day a flock of sheep belonging to

This was a season of perilous procrastination. Both parties seemed anxious to postpone the day that was to witness the departure of the British force; and each was suspicious of the good faith of the other. The chiefs withheld, from day to day, the provisions and the carriage-cattle, with which they had undertaken to facilitate our escape from Afghanistan; and Macnaghten, hoping still against hope, and sanguine, even in the midst of every kind of discouragement, still thought that "something might turn up" to avert the humiliation of an enforced withdrawal from the country which we had entered with so much pomp and parade. It was still possible, he thought, that Maclaren's brigade might make good its way to Caubul. It was not then known that it had retraced its steps to Candahar.

Then snow began to fall. On the 18th of December, the doomed force looked out upon the new horror. From morning to evening prayer it fell with frightful perseverance, and before sunset was lying many inches thick upon the ground. Our difficulties had now fearfully increased. Had the force been set in motion a few days before the first snow-fall, and, moving lightly, pushed on by forced marches through the passes, it might have reached Jellalabad in safety. But now everything was against us. The elements were conspiring for our destruction. It was more and more painfully obvious, every day, that the curse of God was brooding over the agents of an unrighteous policy. Whatever may have been the causes of that week's delay—whether the bad faith of the chiefs, the irresolution of the Shah, or the reluctance

cantonments was grazing outside of the walls, under the care of the shepherd. Two men attacked him close under where our sentries, with loaded muskets, were standing. The shepherd fled, and so did the two men with the whole flock of sheep, and drove them along the whole face of cantonment. Report made to the General, whose reply was, 'They had no business to go outside;' and all this time, our garrison are starving!"—[*Captain Johnson's Journal: MS. Records.*]

of the British Envoy, it cut away from under us the last hope that remained of rescuing the British force from the annihilating dangers that hemmed it in on every side.

The 22nd was now fixed upon as the day for the departure of the British troops. On the 19th, the Envoy and the General despatched letters to Ghuznee, Candahar, and Jellalabad, ordering the evacuation of those positions. Money was given freely to the chiefs for cattle which was not sent in for our use; and it was believed that Mahomed Akbar was expecting the treasure thus raised on the instruments of our destruction. Every day "our new allies" became more insolent and defiant. As our difficulties thickened, their demands rose. All hope of succours from Candahar had vanished on the 19th, when intelligence of the return of Maclaren's brigade was received by the Envoy. Macnaghten had clung to this chance, with desperate tenacity, to the last—and now he abandoned all hope of saving the reputation of his country by beating the enemy in the field.

But he had not yet abandoned all hope of saving the reputation of his country by playing a game of dexterous diplomacy, such as could only have been played against a number of disunited factions, almost as hostile to each other as to the common foe. It is not easy to group into one lucid and intelligible whole all the many shifting schemes and devices which distracted the last days of the Envoy's career. It is probable that at this time he could have given no very clear account of the game which he was playing. He appears to have turned first to one party and then to another, eagerly grasping at every new combination that seemed to promise more hopeful results than the last. His mind was by this time unhinged;—his intellect was clouded; his moral perceptions were deadened. The wonder is, not that he was pressed down at last by the tremendous burden of anxiety which had

sate upon him throughout those seven long weeks of unparalleled suffering and disaster, but that he had borne up so long and so bravely under the weight.

It seems, indeed, that Macnaghten, at this time, never knew, from one day to another, with whom he would eventually conclude a treaty for the extrication of the unhappy force from the perils that girt it around as with a ring of fire. He was throwing about money in all directions, and there were hungry claimants, pressing on now from one direction now from another, eager to turn the sufferings of the Feringhees to the best account, and to find the best market for their own influence and authority. He saw no honesty and sincerity among the chiefs; he saw that they were all contending one against the other; every man thinking only of himself. He knew that they had failed in their engagements to him, and he doubted whether he was bound by the obligations which he had contracted, or was free to negotiate with any one who was willing, and able, to offer or to accept terms less degrading in themselves and less likely to be violated. It was his general design to keep the different factions in a state of antagonism with each other, and to cling to the one best able to protect us from the malice of the rest. But he could not determine, of the many combinations that could be formed, which was the best calculated to evolve a state of things most favorable to British interests, and so he seems to have had more than one game in hand at the same time, and hardly to have known which was to be played out.

Ostensibly Macnaghten was at this time in treaty with the Barukzye party. But he was offering at the same time large sums of money to the Ghilzyes and to the Kuzzilbashes to side with the Shah and the British; and if they had declared themselves openly on our side, he might have thrown over the Barukzye alliance. "You can tell the Ghilzyes and Khan Shereen," he wrote on

the 20th of December to Mohun Lal, "that after they have declared for his Majesty and us, and sent in 100 *kurwars* of grain to cantonments, I shall be glad to give them a bond for five lakhs of rupees; and if Naib Sheriff is satisfied that he will do so, he should advance to them as much money as he can. I fear for Mahomed Shah that he is with Akbar; but you will know best. You must let me know before sunrise, if possible, what is likely to be the effect of this proposal, as I must talk accordingly to the Barukzyes, who have shown no disposition to be honest. To save time, you may tell Khan Shereen to correspond with the Shah, if there is a chance of success."

On the following day he wrote again to Mohun Lal, unfolding his views more distinctly with regard to the contemplated alliance with the Ghilzyes and the Kuzzilbash:

December 21, 4 P.M.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your two notes, and I approve of all that you have done. In conversing with anybody, you must say distinctly that I am ready to stand by my engagement with the Barukzyes and other chiefs associated with them; but that if any portion of the Afghans wish our troops to remain in the country, I shall think myself at liberty to break the engagement which I have made to go away, which engagement was made, believing it to be in accordance with the wishes of the Afghan nation. If the Ghilzyes and Kuzzilbashs wish us to stay, let them declare so openly in the course of to-morrow, and we will side with them. The best proof of their wish for us to stay is to send us a large quantity of grain this night—100 or 200 *kurwars*. If they do this, and make their salaam to the Shah early to-morrow, giving his Majesty to understand that we are along with them, I will write to the Barukzyes and tell them my agreement is at an end; but if they (Ghilzyes and Kuzzilbashs) are not prepared to go all lengths with us, nothing should be said about the matter, because the agreement I have made is very good for us.

Yours,

W. H. M.

An hour afterwards he wrote again to Mohun Lal, repeating all this in still more decided language, and declaring that if grain were obtained he should think himself "at liberty to break his agreement of going away on Friday, because that agreement was made under the belief that all the Afghan people wished us to go away." "Do not let me appear in this matter," he wrote, in conclusion; "say that I am ready to stand by my engagement, but that I leave it to the people themselves." And again, after the lapse of another hour, he wrote: "If any grain is coming in to-night, let me have notice of it a few minutes before. Anything that may be intended in our favour must appear before noon to-morrow."

Far better than any explanations that I could offer do these letters unfold the character of Macnaghten's designs. The days on which they were written saw the Envoy in conference, near the banks of the canal, with Akbar Khan and a few chiefs of the Barukzye party. As time advanced, the Sirdars rose in their demands; and every new meeting witnessed the dictation of fresh terms. They called upon us to deliver up to them all our military stores and ammunition, and to surrender the married families as hostages for the fulfilment, on our part, of the conditions of the treaty. Then they demanded that Brigadier Shelton should be given over to them as a hostage; but the Brigadier was unwilling to accept the duty, and the proposal was declined. The hostages given up on the 21st of December were Lieutenants J. B. Conolly, the Envoy's relative and assistant, and Lieutenant Airey, of the 3rd Buffs, who had been acting as the General's aid-de-camp.

On the following day the commissary of ordnance, Lieutenant Eyre, was "ordered to conduct an officer of the Newab Zemaun Khan over the magazine, that he

might make choice of such stores as would be most acceptable to the chiefs."* At the same time the Envoy sent his carriage and horses as a present to Akbar Khan. He was now beginning to despair of deriving any real assistance from the Ghilzyes, who were slow to declare themselves openly on our side, and he saw plainly how dangerous it was to appear to be in treaty with them and the Barukzyes at the same time. Some doubts, too, of the honesty of the course he was pursuing began to obtrude themselves upon him; and he wrote accordingly to Mohun Lal, requesting him to instruct the Ghilzyes not to send in any grain until further advised upon the subject:

December 22, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just got your notes. Pray forbid the Ghilzyes to bring any grain to-night until I talk to them. I cannot say whether they are prepared to do any service. The sending grain to us just now would do more harm than good to our cause; and it would lead the Barukzyes to suppose that I am intriguing with a view of breaking my agreement; but I can never break that agreement so long as all the Khawanen wish me to stand by it. Pray thank our friends, nevertheless, for their kind attention to our interest. I wish very much to please them, and am sorry my treasury is so empty.

Yours,

W. II. M.

December 22, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have just received your note, and send 7000 rupees for Khan Shereen agreeably to your suggestion. He is a good friend of ours, but pray request him not to tell anybody that I have sent the money, for we have scarcely any left. I have not heard from him according to his promise of yesterday, but I suppose that he had no information of importance to send me. I have already written to you begging that the Ghilzyc chiefs should send no grain to-night. They should first openly declare themselves, if

* *Eyre's Journal.*

they think that any injury is likely to occur to themselves by our agreement or our leaving the country. If they do not do so, I must stand by my agreement, whatever may be the consequences. You must understand that I wish to be considered as Sahib-i-rastee; and that if while our present agreement lasts I were to receive a large supply of grain from the Ghilzyes, suspicion would be raised that I intend to break my engagement, and wish to keep the troops here, in spite of the wishes of all the chiefs to the contrary. It would be very agreeable to stop here for a few months instead of having to travel through the snow; but we must not consider what is agreeable, but what is consistent with our faith. I am led to expect a visit to-night from N[aib] S[heriff] and the Ghilzye chiefs.

Yours,

W. H. M.

It was on the evening of this 22nd of December, when Macnaghten, long tossed about on a sea of doubt and distraction—perplexed in the extreme by the manifest bad faith and the ever-increasing demands of the chiefs—seeing no end to the perilous uncertainties of his position, and wearied out beyond human endurance by days and nights of ceaseless anxiety and bewilderment—was in a temper to grasp at any new thing that might seem to open a door of escape from the embarrassments which surrounded him—that Akbar Khan sent in Captain Skinner from the city with a new string of proposals.

The Envoy had been warned of the danger of treating independently with the young Barukzye Sirdar; he had been told that treachery was spreading itself around him, and that he would be enclosed in its toils.* But he had

* Mohun Lal's story, as given in a letter to Mr. Colvin, is worth quoting, though its meaning is somewhat obscured by its dubious phraseology:—"Mahomed Akbar, being afraid of the union of the Dourancees with the Shah, induced Surwar Khan and others, by the hope of reward, to deceive the Envoy, by saying that he will either spread dissen-

sion in the city to allow us to remain in the country, see us safely pass down to Jellalabad, or act as the Envoy tells him, on the condition that Mahomed Akbar was to receive four lakhs of rupees annually, besides the reward of thirty lakhs from the British Government, and made the Vizier of the Suddozye Kings from generation to generation. As soon as

now become desperate. Anything was better than the wearing uncertainty which had so long been unhinging his mind. Akbar Khan sent tempting proposals; and the Envoy flung himself upon the snare. He knew that there was danger, but he had become regardless of it. Anything was better than the life he had so long been leading. Even death itself was better than such a life.

Captain Skinner came into cantonments, accompanied by Mahomed Sadig and Surwar Khan, the Lohanee merchant.* The English officer sate down to dinner with the Envoy whilst the two Afghans remained in another room. A gleam of hope passed over Macnaghten's careworn face when Skinner told him, in a light jesting manner, that he was the bearer of a message from Akbar Khan of a portentous nature, and that he felt as one loaded with combustibles.† But the message was not

I heard this by the Persian chief, I wrote to the Envoy that Mahomed Akbar was deceiving us, and he should place no faith in anything he says. I also particularly informed him that he may give money to anybody he likes to espouse the cause of the Shah and us, but never to the chiefs, as it will not induce them to do us service like the others, but will incite and prepare them against us. Unfortunately he was assured by Surwar Khan, Naib Ameer, &c., of their favorable service, and to advance lakhs of rupees. He was also prompted by these individuals to give the paper of the above-mentioned agreement to Mahomed Akbar. He showed it, and said falsely to Ameen-oollah that the Envoy has promised the money it contains, if Mahomed Akbar were to kill, catch, or send him alive to the Envoy. Ameen-oollah threw himself at his feet, and said he is doing all this against us merely for the good of his father, and he (Akbar) has sense to know it perfectly; therefore he should not lose time either to catch or murder the

Envoy, which will procure him all the power and money he wishes. I wrote all this to the Envoy on the very morning of his murder, begged him to take very great care of himself, and do not go so often to meet Mahomed Akbar out of the cantonment, as he is the man that nobody can trust his word upon oath. I also added that the Dou-rances, as well as Ameen-oollah (the instigation of Akbar), being jealous of the return of his father, have taken the part of the Shah, and will, in the course of two days, wait upon his Majesty, ask us to remain here in the hope of receiving the money promised them by me."—[*MS. Records.*]

* Mahomed Sadig was a first cousin of Akbar Khan. Surwar Khan had been, in the earlier stages of the campaign, extensively engaged in supplying the army with camels. He was in the confidence of Sir A. Burnes, and was generally esteemed a friend of the British.

† *Letter of Captain Colin Mackenzie to Lieutenant Eyre: Eyre's Journal.*

then delivered. The proposals were to be stated by the Afghan delegates, who were soon closeted with the Envoy. Skinner alone was present at the interview. Mahomed Sadig stated the proposals that had been made by Akbar Khan. It was proposed that an agreement should be entered into on the following day, to the effect that Akbar Khan and the Ghilzies should unite themselves with the British troops, which were to be drawn up outside of cantonments, and at a given signal should assault Mahmood Khan's fort and seize the person of Ameen-oollah Khan. Then followed a startling offer, from which the Envoy shrunk back with abhorrence. This was the offer of Ameen-oollah's head, which, for a sum of money, Mahomed Sadig declared should be presented to the British Envoy. Macnaghten at once rejected the offer. It was never, he said, his custom, nor that of his country, to pay a price for blood. Then Mahomed Sadig went on to state the proposals of the Barukzye Sirdar. The English were to remain in Afghanistan until the spring; and then, to save their credit, by withdrawing, as though of their own free will. Shah Soojah was to remain in the country as King, and Akbar Khan was to be his Wuzeer. As a reward for these services, Akbar Khan was to receive an annuity of four lakhs of rupces from the British Government, and a bonus of thirty lakhs!

Wild as were these proposals, the Envoy caught eagerly at them. He did not hesitate for a moment. He had, from first to last, clung to the hope of something being evolved out of the chaos of difficulty, that would enable him to retain his position in the country, at all events till the coming spring; and now there suddenly welled up within him a hope that he had obtained the object of his desires. He now accepted the proposals; and signified his assent in a Persian paper written by his own hand. With this the Afghan delegates returned to

the city and made known to Akbar Khan the success of their mission. Captain Skinner returned with them.

The morning of the 23rd of December found Macnaghten restless and excited. A great crisis had arrived. That day was to decide the fate of the British force, and determine the question of the loss or the salvation of our national honour. It is probable that the morning brought with it some doubts and misgivings; but he brushed the obtrusive thoughts aside, and endeavoured to persuade himself, as he did to persuade others, that there was no treachery to be feared.

Having breakfasted, he sent for the officers of his staff—Lawrence, Trevor, and Mackenzie—who were his friends and counsellors, to whom on all occasions but this he had entrusted his designs—to accompany him to the conference with Akbar Khan. Mackenzie, finding him alone, heard from him now, for the first time, the history of this new negotiation, and at once exclaimed that it was a plot. “A plot!” replied the Envoy, hastily; “let me alone for that—trust me for that!”

He had braced himself up with desperate courage for the conference which was to be followed by such great results; and now he sent for the General to acquaint him with the nature of the proposals and to request his aid to carry the scheme into effect. Startled by the announcement, and little comprehending all the depths and intricacies of the perilous game which the Envoy had now in hand, Elphinstone asked what part the other Barukzyes, who had been foremost in the previous negotiations, were to take in those now on foot, and was told in reply that they were “not in the *plot*.” On the untutored ear of the single-minded veteran this significant monosyllable smote with an ominous sound. He began now to understand the double game which was being played by the Envoy on one side, and the young Barukzye

Sirdar on the other, and he eagerly asked the former if he did not apprehend that some treachery was at work. "None at all," said Macnaghten, in reply; "I wish you to have two regiments and two guns got ready, as speedily and as quietly as possible, for the capture of Mahmood Khan's fort; the rest you may leave to me." But still the General spoke of the danger of such machinations, and urged him to pause before he committed himself irretrievably to so perilous a course. Elphinstone had unfortunately been talking about danger so incessantly since the very commencement of the outbreak, that now, when he uttered only words of common sense and prudence, the warning notes fell upon Macnaghten's ears like the old imbecile croakings of timidity and irresolution which had been irritating him for so many weeks, and he now turned away with impatience, saying, "I understand these things better than you."* Elphinstone went; but, in spite of Macnaghten's confidence, he could not dispossess himself of the belief that treachery was brewing, and that the Envoy was

* "On the morning of the 23rd," says General Elphinstone, "I received a note from the Envoy, saying that he hoped he had made an arrangement which would enable us to remain in the country; and that he would shortly acquaint me with all the particulars. I soon afterwards received a message from him, desiring to see me, when he informed me that he had made an arrangement with Mahomed Akbar, by which Shah Soojah would remain on the throne—Mahomed Akbar being Wuzer. He was to receive a large sum of money, and Ameen-oollah was to be delivered to us a prisoner. I then asked what part Newab Zeman Khan and Oosman Khan were to take in this? To which I received answer that they were not in the plot. I replied that I did not like the word 'plot'—that it was an ominous one—and I begged to know if there were no fear of treachery? The Envoy's reply was, 'None whatever—I am certain the thing will succeed. What I want you to do is to have two regiments and guns got quickly ready, and, without making any show, to be prepared the moment required to move towards Mahmood Khan's fort.' I further discussed with him the danger he was incurring; but he replied, 'Leave it all to me—I understand these things better than you do.' I then left him, and he shortly afterwards proceeded with his suite and a few of his cavalry escort to the interview. Before we separated, I asked him if there was anything else I could do? He replied, 'Nothing, but to have the two regiments and two guns in readiness, and the garrison to be on the alert;' which was accordingly ordered."

rushing upon destruction. So, hoping that yet something might be done to arrest him, he sate down and wrote him this letter:

December 23.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I have reconsidered the subject of our conversation, with respect to which I have to observe, that to enable us really to be of consequence in assisting our adherents, the magazine and forts ought to be restored, and the supplies, for at least three months, laid in at once; it would not do to depend on it daily, or even monthly. I hope there is no fear of treachery; the sending two guns and two regiments away would divide our force; and our sole dependence is the union of our force. The cantonment, I find, is at present full of Afghans. All this we must think of, and act for the best. What guarantees have we for the truth of all that has been said? I only mention this to make you cautious as to sending away part of our force. Perhaps it is unnecessary with you, who know these people so well. I will be prepared to turn out, if necessary, by drawing the men ready to man the ramparts.

W. K. E.*

This was the last letter ever addressed to the Envoy. It never reached its destination.

About the hour of noon the little party—Macnaghten, Lawrence, Trevor, Mackenzie, and a few horsemen—set out on their ill-omened expedition. Shelton had been invited to accompany them; but he was occupied in getting ready the two regiments and the guns, and was, therefore, unable to attend the conference.† The troops, however, were not ready when the ambassadorial cavalcade rode out of the Seeah-Sungh gate, and the Envoy, observing the backwardness of the military chiefs, bitterly

* *Unpublished Correspondence.*

† "On the morning of the 23rd," wrote Shelton, "about ten o'clock, I got an order to have two corps and some guns ready, to march out to seize, as I understood, the Logur chief. While thus occupied in giving it out, an invitation came from the Envoy to accompany him to an interview with the Sirdar. Being busy, I fortunately could not go, or should probably have shared the same fate."—[*M.S. Records.*]

remarked that it was of a piece with all their arrangements since the commencement of the outbreak. He then went on to speak of the enterprise on which they were engaged; admitted that it was a dangerous one; said that he was playing for a heavy stake, but the prize was worth the risk that was to be incurred. "At all events," he said, "let the loss be what it may, a thousand deaths were preferable to the life I have of late been leading."

They passed out of cantonments. As they went, Macnaghten remembered that a beautiful Arab horse, which Akbar Khan had much coveted, and which the Envoy had purchased from its owner,* had been left behind. Mackenzie was sent back for it, that it might now be presented to the Sirdar. Lawrence was told to hold himself in readiness to ride to the Balla Hissar, to communicate with the King. There were many suspicious appearances, which excited the apprehensions of all but the Envoy. Crowds of armed Afghans were hovering about the cantonment, and clustering in the neighbourhood of Mahmood Khan's fort. Macnaghten saw nothing but the prospect of escaping the disgrace of a sudden retreat from Afghanistan. He looked neither to the right nor to the left. He had a great object in view, and he kept his eyes steadily upon it. He did not even, when the chiefs met him, perceive that a brother of Ameen-oollah Khan was one of the party.

* Captain Grant, the adjutant-general of the Caubul force. "It seems," says Captain Mackenzie, "that Mahomed Akbar had demanded a favourite Arab horse belonging to Captain Grant, assistant adjutant-general of the force. To avoid the necessity of parting with the animal, Captain Grant had fixed his price at the exorbitant sum of 5000 rupees. Unwilling to give so large a price, but determined to gratify the Sirdar, Sir William sent me to Captain Grant to prevail upon him to take a smaller sum, but with orders that, if he were peremptory, the 5000 rupees should be given. I obtained the horse for 3000 rupees, and Sir William appeared much pleased with the prospect of gratifying Mahomed Akbar by the present."—[*Captain Mackenzie's Narrative: Eyre's Journal.*]

Near the banks of the river, midway between Mahmood Khan's fort and the bridge, about 600 yards from the cantonment, there were some small hillocks, on the further slope of which, where the snow was lying less thickly than on other parts, some horse-cloths were now spread by one of Akbar Khan's servants. The English officers and the Afghan Sirdars had exchanged salutations and conversed for a little while on horseback. The Arab horse, with which Mackenzie had returned, had been presented to Akbar Khan, who received it with many expressions of thanks, and spoke also with gratitude of the gift of the pistols which he had received on the preceding day.* It was now proposed that they should dismount. The whole party accordingly repaired to the hill-side. Macnaghten stretched himself at full length on the bank; Trevor and Mackenzie, burdened with presentiments of evil, seated themselves beside him. Lawrence stood behind his chief until urged by one of the Khans to seat himself, when he knelt down on one knee, in the attitude of a man ready for immediate action. A question from Akbar Khan, who sat beside Macnaghten, opened the business of the conference. He abruptly asked the Envoy if he were ready to carry out the proposals of the preceding evening? "Why not?" asked Macnaghten. The Afghans were by this time gathering around in numbers, which excited both the surprise and the suspicion of Lawrence and Mackenzie, who said, that if the conference was to be a secret one, the intruders ought to be removed. With a movement of doubtful sincerity some of the chiefs then lashed out with their whips at the closing circle; but Akbar Khan

* A handsome pair of double-barrelled pistols belonging to Captain Lawrence, of which Akbar Khan had expressed his admiration at a previous meeting, and which had accordingly been presented to him.

said that their presence was of no consequence, as they were all in the secret with him.

Scarcely were the words uttered, when the Envoy and his companions were violently seized from behind. The movement was sudden and surprising. There was a scene of terrible confusion, which no one can distinctly describe. The officers of the Envoy's staff were dragged away, and compelled each to mount a horse ridden by an Afghan chief. Soon were they running the gauntlet through a crowd of Ghazees, who struck out at them as they passed. Trevor unfortunately slipped from his insecure seat behind Dost Mahomed Khan, and was cut to pieces on the spot. Lawrence and Mackenzie, more fortunate, reached Mahmood Khan's fort alive.

In the mean while, the Envoy himself was struggling desperately on the ground with Akbar Khan. The look of wondering horror that sat upon his upturned face will not be forgotten by those who saw it to their dying days. The only words he was heard to utter were, "*Az barae Khoda*" ("For God's sake"). They were, perhaps, the last words spoken by one of the bravest gentlemen that ever fell a sacrifice to his erring faith in others. He had struggled from the first manfully against his doom, and now these last manful struggles cost the poor chief his life. Exasperated past all control by the resistance of his victim, whom he designed only to seize, Akbar Khan drew a pistol from his girdle—one of those pistols for the gift of which only a little while before he had profusely thanked the Envoy—and shot Macnaghten through the body. Whether the wretched man died on the spot—or whether he was slain by the infuriated Ghazees, who now pressed eagerly forward, is not very clearly known—but these miserable fanatics flung themselves upon the prostrate body of the English gentleman, and hacked it to pieces with their knives.

Thus perished William Hay Macnaghten—struck down by the hand of the favourite son of Dost Mahomed. Thus perished as brave a gentleman as ever, in the midst of fiery trial, struggled manfully to rescue from disgrace the reputation of a great country. Throughout those seven weeks of unparalleled difficulty and danger he had confronted with steadfast courage every new peril and perplexity that had risen up before him; and, a man of peace himself, had resisted the timid counsels of the warriors, and striven to infuse, by the manliness of his example, some strength into their fainting hearts. Whatever may be the judgment of posterity on other phases of his character, and other incidents of his career, the historian will ever dwell with pride upon the unfailing courage and constancy of the man who, with everything to discourage and depress him, surrounded by all enervating influences, was ever eager to counsel the nobler and the manlier course, ever ready to bear the burdens of responsibility, and face the assaults of danger. There was but one civilian at Caubul; and he was the truest soldier in the camp.

It is not easy to estimate correctly the character of William Macnaghten. Of the moral and intellectual attributes of the ill-fated Envoy very conflicting accounts have been rendered; and it is probable that in all these conflicting accounts some leaven of truth resides. There are few men whose characters are not made up of antagonistic qualities; and Macnaghten was not one of the few. In early life he had distinguished himself by the extent of his philological acquirements; and was reputed as one of the most accomplished Oriental scholars in the presidencies of India. With a deep insight into the character of the natives of the East was blended the kindest sympathy and toleration towards them. In the knowledge, indeed, of the native languages, the institu-

tions, and the character of the people of Hindostan, he was surpassed by none of the many accomplished officers who have made them their study. His long connexion with the judicial department of the public service had afforded him opportunities, which his temper and his taste led him to improve, of maturing and perfecting this essential branch of official knowledge. In attention to business he was one of the most unwearied of men; his pen was ever in his hand; he wrote rapidly, and expressed himself on most subjects with clearness; he was quick in his apprehension of the views of others, and accommodated himself with facility to shifting circumstances. But at this point there are many who believe that they cease to tread upon undebatable ground. It is admitted that he was an accomplished Oriental scholar, a good judicial officer, an apt secretary, and a kind-hearted man; but it is denied that, in any enlarged acceptance of the word, he is entitled to be called a statesman.

Sir Alexander Burnes was constantly writing to his friends in India, "Macnaghten is an excellent man, but quite out of place *here*." Burnes was not an unprejudiced witness; and he, doubtless, expressed himself in language too sweeping and unqualified. But there are many who believe with Burnes, that Macnaghten was out of his place in Afghanistan. It is hard to say who would not have been more or less out of place, in the situation which he was called upon suddenly to occupy. The place, indeed, was one to which no English officer ought to have been called. For a Calcutta Secretary to be at Caubul at all was necessarily to be out of place. If Macnaghten, suddenly transplanted from the bureau of an Anglo-Indian Governor to the stirrup of an Afghan monarch, is chargeable with some errors, it is, perhaps, more just, as it is more generous, to wonder not that those

errors were so numerous, but that they were so few. To govern such a people as the Afghans through such a King as Shah Soojah, was an experiment in which an English officer might fail without the sacrifice of his reputation. When we come to think, now, of what was attempted, we cease to marvel at the result. The marvel is, that utter ruin did not overtake the scheme at an earlier date—that the day of reckoning was so long delayed. The policy itself was so inherently faulty that success was an unattainable result.

The causes of the failure are not to be sought in the personal character of the Envoy. That character may have been one of many accidental circumstances which may in some sort have helped to develop it; but, sooner or later, ruin must have overtaken the scheme, let who might be the agent of it. In this view of the case, Macnaghten is not to be acquitted; but it is on Macnaghten the Secretary, not on Macnaghten the Envoy, that our censures must then descend. Macnaghten the Envoy, however, was not free from human infirmity. Most men have an unhappy faculty of believing what they wish to be true. In Macnaghten this propensity was unnaturally developed. God had cursed him with a strong delusion that he should believe a lie. He believed in the popularity of Shah Soojah and the tranquillity of Afghanistan. To have admitted the non-existence of either, would have been to have admitted the failure of the policy which he had recommended, and with which he was, in no small measure, personally identified. But Macnaghten did not seek to deceive others; he was himself deceived. When he spoke of the popularity of Shah Soojah, he believed that the Shah was popular; when he reported the tranquillity of Afghanistan, he believed that the country was tranquil. He was sincere, but he was miserably mistaken. Everything he saw

took colour in his eyes from the hues of his own sanguine temperament. From the day when on entering Candahar he beheld a joyous people welcoming their restored monarch with feelings almost amounting to adoration, to the last luckless day of his life, when he went out to the fatal conference, firmly believing in the good faith and good feeling of his Afghan allies, he continued steadily to create for himself all kinds of favorable omens and encouraging symptoms, and lived in a state of blind confidence unparalleled in the history of human infatuation. To this self-deception some of the finest qualities of his nature largely contributed. The very goodness of his heart and generosity of his disposition moved him to regard the character and conduct of others with a favour to which they were seldom entitled. Macnaghten was too noble-minded to be suspicious—but he erred on the other side; he wanted some of the sterner stuff which will not suffer the soundness of the judgment to be weakened by the generosity of the heart.

When not blinded by his partiality for any pet projects of his own, he was by no means wanting in political sagacity. He could decide justly, as he could promptly, on points of detail as they rose up one by one before him; but as soon as anything occurred to cast discredit upon the general policy of the Afghan expedition, by indicating the germs of failure, he resolutely refused to see what others saw, and censured those others for seeing it. Hence it was that he received coldly, if not contemptuously, those elaborate general reviews of the condition and prospects of Afghanistan which Burnes and Conolly thrust upon him, and resented every effort that was made by Rawlinson and others to draw his attention towards the unquiet and feverish symptoms, which, from time to time, developed them-

selves in different parts of the unsettled country. His correspondence indicates an unwillingness, rather than an inability, to take any large and comprehensive views of Afghan policy. He seems to have shrunk from applying to that policy the test of any great principles; and to have addressed himself rather to the palliation of accidental symptoms than to the eradication of those constitutional diseases which were eating into the very life of the government which he directed.

Of Macnaghten's humanity I have never entertained a doubt. But it is a proof of the inconsistency even of the kindest and most amiable characters, that the Envoy, when greatly disquieted and perplexed by the difficulties which thickened around him, and irritated by the opposition, which he could not subdue, sometimes thought of resorting to measures repugnant to humanity, for the suppression of evils which baffled all the more lenient efforts of legitimate diplomacy. But these sterner feelings soon passed away; and all the more generous sentiments of his nature held dominion over him again. He regretted the excesses—always rather those of word than of deed—into which he had been momentarily betrayed, and was as merciful towards a fallen enemy as he had been eager in his pursuit of a triumphant one. Macnaghten was anything but a cautious man; his first hasty impulses were often set down in writing with perilous unreserve; and it would be unjust to record against him, as his positive opinion, everything that he set down suggestively in his hasty letters to his numerous correspondents, or spoke out still more hastily to his friends.

Posterity may yet discuss the question, whether, in these last fatal negotiations with Akbar Khan, Macnaghten acted strictly in accordance with that good faith which is the rule of English statesmen, and

for which our country, in spite of some dubious instances, is still honoured by all the nations of the East. In one of the last letters ever written by him, the Envoy said, "It would be very agreeable to stop here for a few months instead of to travel through the snow; but we must not consider what is agreeable, but what is consistent with our faith." On the same day, too—the day before his death—he had written, "I can never break that agreement (with the Barukzyes) so long as all the Khawanen wish me to stand by it." It has been questioned whether the negotiations he was then carrying on with the Ghilzyes and Kuzzilbashes were consistent with his obligations to the Barukzye Sirdars. The stipulations, however, on the part of the British diplomatist, in this case, extended no further than the promise of certain money payments in return for certain specific services, and Macnaghten may have considered himself justified in retaining those services conditionally on the rupture of the existing covenant with the Barukzye chiefs. That covenant, indeed, was one of so precarious a nature—it was sliding away from him more and more certainly as time advanced—there was so little prospect of its obligations being fulfilled, that it seemed necessary to have something to fall back upon in the event of the open annulment of the treaty, the obligations of which had long been practically denied. Up to the evening of the 22nd of December, Macnaghten had been willing to abide by the stipulations of the treaty with the confederate chiefs; but there were such manifest symptoms of bad faith on the part of the chiefs constantly breaking out, that it appeared to him but ordinary prudence to prepare himself for an event so probable as an open rupture. He was ready to proceed, in mutual good faith, to the accomplishment of the original treaty; and so long as the

chiefs adhered to their engagements, he was prepared to evacuate the country, but he believed that it was his duty to prepare himself also for a rupture with the chiefs, and to purchase supplies wherever he could obtain them, for the use of the troops in the event of their retaining their position.

But the compact with Akbar Khan was altogether of another kind. There was nothing of a conditional character about it. The Envoy had, in the course of the day, virtually acknowledged that to break off the negotiations then pending with the chiefs would be a breach of good faith. Nothing had occurred between the hour in which he wrote this to Mohun Lal and that in which he received the overtures of Akbar Khan, to absolve him from obligations from which he was not absolved before. The same principle of diplomatic integrity which he had applied to the case of the Ghilzye alliance was doubly applicable to this: "It would be very agreeable to stop here for a few months instead of to travel through the snow; but we must not consider what is agreeable, but what is consistent with our faith." If we read Macnaghten's subsequent conduct by the light of these high-principled words, it must in truth be pronounced that he stands self-condemned.

In estimating the character of these transactions, it should always be borne steadily in mind that the Afghan chiefs had from the first violated their engagements with the British, and exacted from them after-conditions not named in the treaty. Their want of faith, indeed, was so palpable, that Macnaghten would, at any time, have been justified in declaring that the treaty was annulled. It is plain, that whilst they were violating their engagements he was under no obligation to adhere to the conditions of the violated treaty. But it appears to me that this matter is altogether distinct from the question of the

honesty of negotiating with one party whilst negotiations are pending with another. There would have been no breach of faith in breaking off the treaty with the confederate chiefs; but it was a breach of faith to enter into any new engagements until that treaty was broken off. It is certain that up to the time of his receipt of the fatal overtures from Akbar Khan, Macnaghten considered that he was bound by his engagements with the confederate chiefs. He might, it is true, have declared those engagements at an end, but until such a declaration was made, he was not at liberty to enter secretly into any new negotiations practically annulling the old.

And whatever objections may lie against the general honesty of the compact, it is certain that they apply with double force to that portion of it which involved the seizure of Ameen-oollah Khan. It is not to be justified by any reference to the infamous character of that chief. Ameen-oollah Khan was one of our "new allies." He had been, with the other chiefs, in friendly negotiation with Macnaghten. It was now proposed, during a suspension of hostilities—whilst, indeed, we were in friendly intercourse with the Afghan chiefs, this very Ameen-oollah Khan included—that a body of troops should be got ready as quietly as possible for secret service, that a sudden attack should be made on the unsuspecting garrison of Mahmood Khan's fort, and that one of our allies—one of the chiefs with whom the Envoy was in treaty—should be violently seized. I confess that I cannot see anything to justify such a measure as this. It certainly was not in accordance with that good faith, the observance of which Macnaghten had declared to be of more importance than the retention of our position in the country.

But although I cannot bring myself to justify the act, either on the plea that the chiefs had not observed the engagements into which they had entered, or that

Ameen-oollah Khan was an infamous wretch, and one of the arch-enemies of the British, it appears to me to be as little the duty of the historian severely to condemn the actor as to justify the act.* It is one of those cases in which the exercise of charity is a solemn duty—one of those cases, to the consideration of which every one should bring the kindest resolution to weigh well the temptation before he measures the offence. There are cases to which, it is my deliberate conviction, a strict application of the ordinary rules of right and wrong would be a grievous injustice. It is easy, in one's closet, to sit in judgment upon the conduct of a man tempted far beyond the common limits of human temptation—envi-roned and hemmed in by difficulties and dangers—overwhelmed with responsibility which there is no one to share—the lives of sixteen thousand men resting on his decision—the honour of his country at stake—with a perfidious enemy before him, a decrepit general at his side, and a paralysed army at his back—driven to negotiate by the imbecility of his companions, and then thwarted in his negotiations by the perfidy of his “new allies.” But if, without injustice and cruelty, we would pass sentence on the conduct of a man so environed, we must ponder well all these environments, and consider what must have been the effect of seven wearing weeks of such unparalleled trial even on the strongest mind, and what must have been the temptation that arrayed itself before him, when there suddenly gleamed upon him a hope of saving at once the lives of his companions and the credit of the British nation. If, when that great temptation burst suddenly upon his path, and, dazzled by its delusive brilliancy, he saw the great object set before him,

* That it was not actually committed is, of course, nothing to the point. The question is to be argued as though the seizure of Ameen-oollah Khan had been a perpetrated act and not a baffled intention.

but did not see the slough of moral turpitude to be passed through before it could be attained, it is right that we should remember that Macnaghten, though a good and a brave man, was *but* a man after all, and that human strength, at the best, is but weakness to resist the pressure of an overwhelming Providence.

We have not ~~the~~ same intelligible guides to a right estimate of the conduct of Akbar Khan. If we regard the assassination of the British Envoy as a deliberate, predetermined act, it can only be said of it that it stands recorded as one of the basest, foulest murders that ever stained the page of history. But it does not appear that the murder of Macnaghten was premeditated by the Sirdar. It seems to have been the result of one of those sudden gusts of passion which were among the distinguishing features of the young Barukzye's character, and which had often before betrayed him into excesses laden with the pangs of after-repentance. The seizure of the Envoy and his companions, which was designed by the Sirdar, was an act of deliberate treachery, which the chiefs would perhaps endeavour to justify by declaring that they only designed to do towards the Envoy as the Envoy had declared himself willing to do towards Ameen-oollah Khan.* But whilst Macnaghten had only consented to a proposal made to him by others—whilst he had merely yielded to temptation, and at the instance of one Afghan chief consented to the betrayal of the other—Akbar Khan, with deliberate subtlety and malice, wove the net which he was to cast over the deluded Englishman, and treacherously enclosed him in the toils. The trap

* It appears to have been Akbar's struggle, a cry was raised that the Khan's intention to have seized the English were coming out of cantonment, and that Akbar Khan, thinking that he might still be baffled, in a sudden gust of passion drew out a pistol and fired. I have been informed that, during the

was cunningly laid and craftily baited; and the unhappy Envoy, all his perceptions blunted by the long-continued overstraining of his mind, fell readily into the snare, and went insanely to his undoing. Like Burnes, he had been warned of the treachery that encompassed him; and like his ill-fated colleague he had disregarded the warnings that might have saved him. The brave confidence of Macnaghten clung to him to the last; his sanguine temperament, at one time so dangerous and disastrous, at another so noble and inspiring—which more than anything else had sustained the character of the nation throughout the sore trials which it had brought upon us—lured him at last to his death.

CHAPTER VIII.

[December, 1841—January, 1842.]

The Capitulation—Supineness of the Garrison—Negotiations resumed—
Efforts of Major Pottinger—Demands of the Chiefs—The Final Treaty—
Humiliation of the Garrison—General Remarks.

It is recorded, that on the 23rd of December, 1841, the representative of the British Government was slain at a conference with the Afghan Sirdars, within sight of the British cantonments at Caubul; and it is now to be added to the record that this—the foulest indignity that one nation can put upon another, the murder of an ambassador in the performance of his ambassadorial duties—roused not the dormant energies of the military chiefs, or awakened them to a sense of the depths of humiliation in which they were plunging their unhappy country. The British Envoy was killed, in broad day, and upon the open plain, but not a gun was fired from the ramparts of the cantonment; not a company of troops sallied out to rescue or to avenge. The body of the British Minister was left to be hacked to pieces, and his mangled remains were paraded, in barbarous triumph, about the streets and bazaars of the city.

The military chiefs assert that they did not know, until the day after his death, that Macnaghten had been.

murdered. Elphinstone says it was thought by himself and others that the Envoy had proceeded to the city for the purpose of negotiating.* But there were those in cantonments who had seen the tumult at the place of conference, and who knew that some violence had been committed. One officer said that he distinctly saw the Envoy fall—and that afterwards he could see the Ghazees hacking to pieces the body of the murdered man. If the General did not tremble for the safety of the political chief, he was the only man in the garrison who encouraged the belief that the lives of the Envoy and his companions, if they had not been already sacrificed, were not now in imminent danger. There was something very remarkable, if not suspicious, in the unwonted confidence of the General at this time. It was not his habit to look upon the bright side of things, or to take any great pains to encourage and reassure the troops under his command. He had, on almost every occasion, taken the most desponding view of affairs, and freely expressed his apprehension of dangers, which had no existence save in his own mind. But now he sent round his Adjutant-General to the troops to assure them of the Envoy's safety. They were all under arms. Captain Grant rode to the head of each regiment, and by Elphinstone's orders told them that the conference had been interrupted by the Ghazees—that the Envoy and his companions had been removed to the city—but that they would return immediately to cantonments. Some who heard this authoritative announcement still believed that they would

* "Some time after I had given the necessary orders (for the two regiments and the guns), Captain Anderson came to me and said, 'They have seized the Envoy;' and one of the escort at the same time said, 'They have seized the Lord Sahib and taken him off to the city.' By myself and others it was thought at the time that Sir William had proceeded to the city for the purpose of negotiating. I was also told that a few shots had been fired. The garrison was got ready and remained under arms all day."—[*Statement of General Elphinstone.*]

never hear the Envoy's voice, or look upon his living face again. The whole garrison was in a state of painful excitement; and when the shades of evening fell over the cantonment, and still no certain intelligence of the fate of Macnaghten had arrived, not an officer joined the mess-table of his regiment, or sate down to his solitary meal without a leaden weight of gloom and despondency at his heart.

The day, indeed, had been one of intense anxiety. It had been, too, a busy stirring time within the cantonment walls. The authorities seem to have been stimulated into something of activity at home, though they could not bring themselves to do anything abroad. They got up a little war against the Afghans, whom business or curiosity had brought into cantonments, and who were now either eagerly trafficking or idly looking about them in the square. All the men of rank who could be found were placed under arrest; whilst hundreds of less note, apprehending that a similar fate might be awaiting them, rushed towards the different gates, jostling and upsetting each other on the icy ground, and creating a scene of indescribable confusion in their efforts to escape. A lull succeeded; but as the evening advanced, the noise and confusion in the city were such that the troops were again turned out and the cantonment works manned,* in expectation of coming dangers. The Ghazees were mustering, in the belief that the British troops would attack the city and avenge the murder of their ambassador. But all thought of doing had long ago passed away from the minds of our military chiefs. They had settled down into the belief that now it had become their duty only to suffer.

With the morrow came a confirmation of the worst

* "At nine P.M. a great disturbance was heard towards the city, horrible shouts and cries, with rattling of musketry, caused the assembly to be sounded and the walls again manned." —[Lieutenant Melville's Narrative.]

fears of those who never thought to see the Envoy re-enter the cantonment-gates. They waited for tidings of him, and tidings came at last. Though he had been killed almost within musket-shot of our ramparts, nothing had been done by the military chiefs to solve the painful doubts which perplexed them throughout that disastrous 23rd of December. It was thought that if they only waited long enough for it, some certain intelligence would come at last; and it came at last, on the afternoon of the 24th, in the shape of a letter from Captain Lawrence, and certain overtures from the confederate chiefs, seeking a renewal of the negotiations on the basis of the treaty initiated by the deceased Envoy.

As the game of negotiation was now to be commenced anew, it was necessary to secure the services of a new negotiator. There was a man then in cantonments of whom little had been seen or heard for some weeks, and of whom the chroniclers and journalists of the insurrection had up to this time made little or no mention, in connexion with the stirring scenes in which Macnaghten had been the chief actor, but to whom the garrison now turned as to the only man fitted to take the Envoy's place. Ever since his arrival from Charekur, Major Pottinger had been incapacitated from active employment by the wound he had received in the early part of November. The severity of his sufferings had necessarily been much increased by the hardships of his perilous journey from Charekur to Caubul, and during the greater part of the time since his arrival at the latter place he had been confined to his bed. But he was now, in the difficult conjuncture that had arisen, ready to bring all the manly vigour and high courage which had done so much to roll back from the gates of Herat the tide of Persian invasion, to the new duty of endeavouring to rescue his country from the degradation in which

it had been sunk by the faint hearts of the military chiefs.

The evening of the 24th saw Pottinger in council with General Elphinstone, Brigadiers Shelton and Anquetil, and Colonel Chambers, the four senior officers of the garrison. The chiefs had sent in a letter, sealed by Mahomed Zemaun Khan, Akbar Khan, Ameen-oollah Khan, Oosman Khan, and others, with a memorandum of the terms on which they were prepared to grant the army a safe conduct to Peshawur. This was now translated to the military officers, who agreed upon a memorandum to be sent back in reply. On the following day the memorandum was sent in by Ameer Mahomed Khan, who, being in the British cantonments on the day of the Envoy's death, had been seized and detained as a hostage. It was a rough draft of the treaty proposed by the chiefs with the assent of the English authorities; and it thus appears translated from the original, with the subsequent remarks of the chiefs, after each article, believed to be in the hand-writing of Akbar Khan:

ROUGH DRAFT OF THE TREATY WITH THE ASSENT OF THE
ENGLISH AUTHORITIES.

Article 1. "There shall be no delay in the departure of the English army."

Agreed to. They will march twenty-four hours after having received a thousand carriage-cattle, which shall be either camels or yaboos.

[*Remark.* It rests with them (the English); let them pay the hire as they may be able.]

Article 2. "Afghan Sirdars shall accompany the army, to prevent any one offering opposition, and to assist in procuring supplies."

It is very advisable.

[*Remark.* Sirdar Oosman Khan and Shah Dowlut Khan.]

Article 3. "The Jellalabad army shall march from Peshawur before the Caubul force starts."

It is agreed to. Do you name some person who shall accompany them.

[*Remark.* Abdool Ghuffoor Khan.]

Article 4. "The Ghuznee force, having made their preparations, shall speedily march to Peshawur by Caubul."

It is agreed to. Do you name some proper person to accompany them.

[*Remark.* A relation of the Naib or of Mehtur Moossa.]

Article 5. "The Candahar force, and all other British troops in Afghanistan, shall quickly depart for Hindostan."

It is agreed. Let proper people accompany them.

[*Remark.* Newab Jubbur Khan.]

Article 6. "The whole of the property of the Ameer (Dost Mahomed Khan) which is in the hands of the English Government, or of individual officers, shall be left behind."

It is agreed to. Whatever is with the public authorities is known to you; whatever is with private officers point out and take.

Article 7. "Whatever property belonging to the English cannot be carried away shall be taken care of and sent by the first opportunity."

It is agreed to: but we have given over all that remains to the Newab.

[*Remark.* The guns, ordnance stores, and muskets, must be given to me.]

Article 8. "In case Shah Soojah should wish to remain at Caubul, we will give him yearly a subsistence of a lakh of rupees."

It is agreed to. Do whatever you think advisable, wishing to show your friendship for us.

Article 9. "In case the family of Shah Soojah should be left behind, from want of carriage-cattle, we will fix the place now occupied by them in the Balla Hissar for their dwelling-place, until they can depart for Hindostan."

It is agreed to. The honour of the King is the honour of the Douranees; and it is becoming in you.*

Article 10. "When the English army arrives at Peshawur, arrangements shall be made for the march of Dost Mahomed

* The 8th and 9th articles are Khan, as though, on consideration, scored out in the original by Akbar they were distasteful to him.

Khan, and all other Afghans, with all their property, families, and children."

It is agreed to. They shall all be sent to you with honour and in safety.

Article 11. "When Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the others arrive safely at Peshawur, then the family of the Shah shall be at liberty to depart; that departing they may arrive at the place fixed upon."

It is agreed to.

Article 12. "Four English gentlemen shall remain as hostages in Caubul until Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans shall have arrived at Peshawur, when the English gentlemen shall be allowed to depart."

It is agreed to.

[*Remark.* Let there be six hostages.]

Article 13. "Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan and Sirdar Oosman Khan shall accompany the English army to Peshawur, and take them there in safety."*

It is agreed to.

[*Remark.* Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan.]

Article 14. "After the departure of the English, friendly relations shall be continued,—i.e., that the Afghan Government, without the consent and advice of the English Government, shall not form any treaty or connexion with a foreign power; and should they (the Afghans) ever ask assistance against foreign invasion, the English Government will not delay in sending such assistance."

It is agreed to, as far as we are concerned; but in this matter the Governor-General of India alone has authority. We will do our best to bring about friendship between the two governments; and by the blessing of the Almighty this wish will be obtained and friendship exist for the future.

Article 15. "Any one who may have assisted Shah Soojah and the English, and may wish to accompany them, shall be allowed to do so. We will not hinder them. And if they remain here, no one will call them to account for what they have done, and no one shall molest them under any pretence. They may remain in this country like the other inhabitants."†

* This article is scored out in the original. have been extended, suggestively, by Pottinger, but disapproved of by Akbar Khan.

† The whole of this article also is scored out. Its provisions seem to

We have interpolated a few words, and it will be friendship if you comply with them.

Article 16. "Should any English gentleman unavoidably be detained, he shall be treated honourably until such time as he can depart."

ARTICLES WHICH HAVE BEEN NEWLY WRITTEN.

Article 1. "Whatever coin there may be in the public treasury must be given up."

We have set apart two lakhs of rupees for our expenses to Peshawur, which is twenty-four yaboos' loads. If there is more than this in the public treasury, either in gold mohurs, ducats, or rupees, it is yours. If you do not believe this, send some one to note and inspect the loads on the day of our departure. If we have said truly, give us a blessing; and if we have spoken falsely, it is your property, take it away, and we shall be convicted of falsehood.

[*Remark.* Let them pay the hire of the yaboos and camels.]

Article 2. "With reference to the remark that was made that we should give up all our guns but six, we have with the force one and a half companies of artillerymen. You have fixed six guns. Half of a company would remain without equipments. Be good enough to give three more small guns, such as are drawn by mules, for the other half-company. It will be a great kindness."

[*Remark.* They cannot be given.]

Article 3. "The muskets in excess of those in use with the regiments must be left behind."

This is agreed to. Whatever muskets are in addition to those in use with the regiments, together with shot and powder and other ordnance stores, all by way of friendship shall be the property of the Newab.

Article 4. "General Sale, together with his wife and daughter, and the other gentlemen of rank who are married and have children, until the arrival of the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans and their families, and Douranees and Ghilzyes, from Hindostan, shall remain as guests with us; that when the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan shall have arrived, they also shall be allowed to depart with honour from Afghanistan."

General Sale is with the army in Jellalabad, the departure of which is fixed to take place previous to our arrival; and as for the

other two or three gentlemen who are married and present here, we have sent a man to them. They, having seen their families, report that their families will not consent to this proposal; (adding) that you men may do as you like—no one can order us. This proposal is contrary to all order. We now beg you to be good enough to excuse the women from this suffering, and we agree to give as many gentlemen as you may wish for. In friendship, kindness and consideration are necessary, not overpowering the weak with sufferings. Since, for a long time past, we have shown kindness and respect to all Afghans of rank and consequence with whom we have had dealings, you should consider what we have done for them, and not forget kindness. As Shah Soojah was father of a family, and the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan was with his family, and no one gave them annoyance, and we showed them respect, you also now show similar kindness, that friendship may be increased.

[*Remark.* Let them remain with their families. Let the family of the General stop in Caubul, until he himself comes from Jellalabad,—Sturt with his family, Boyd with his family, and Anderson with his family.]

ELDRED POTTINGER, Pol. Agent.
W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-Gen.*

To this the chiefs sent back the following

Agreement of Peace that has been determined on with the Frank English gentlemen, to which engagement, if they consent and act accordingly, on the part of the heads and leaders of Afghanistan henceforward no infractions will occur to their friendly engagements :

1st. That the going of the gentlemen shall be speedy. In regard to the carriage-cattle, let them send money that they may be purchased and sent.

2nd. As regards the going of the Sirdars with the English army that no person may injure it on the way, Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan or Sirdar Mahomed Oosman Khan, whichever may be wished by the English, will be appointed and sent.

3rd. The army of Jellalabad shall march previous to the army of Caubul, and proceed to Peshawur. Sirdar Abdool Suffoor Khan

* *MS. Records.*

having been appointed, will leave this and proceed that he may previously accompany them; secondly, the road of Bhungush has been appointed.

4th. The Ghuznee force having got quickly ready will proceed by the road of Caubul to Peshawur. A relative of Naib Ameenollah Khan, with Mehtur Moosa Khan, has been appointed to accompany it.

5th. The army of Candahar and other parts of Afghanistan, wherever an army may be, will quickly depart for India. Newab Abdool Jubbar Khan has been appointed to carry this into effect.

6th. Whatever property of the Ameer may be with the English will be returned, and nothing retained.

7th. Whatever property of the English may be left for want of carriage will become the property of the Newab.

8th. If the family of Shah Soojah, on account of want of carriage, may remain here, they will be placed in the house of Hadjee Khan.

9th. Whenever the English army may arrive at Peshawur, they will make arrangements for the return of Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, the Afghans and their families, that are in India.

10th. That the English gentlemen, with their families, will be left at Caubul as hostages, until the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan, with the rest of the Afghans and their families, may arrive at Peshawur; or, secondly, that six hostages may be left.

11th. After the departure of the English there shall be perfect friendship between the two states, in so much so that the Government of Afghanistan, without the advice and approval of the British Government, shall enter into no connexion or correspondence with any other power; but if, in its defence, it may require the assistance of the English, they will not delay to afford it. Should the British Government not consent to this, the Afghans are free to make friends with any one they like.

12th. If any gentleman would wish to remain in Caubul, on account of his private affairs, he may do so, and will be treated with justice and respect.

13th. Whatever cash, whether gold or silver, may be in the treasury, shall be paid to Newab Zemaun Khan. A trustworthy person will be appointed, who will issue supplies from stage to stage as far as Peshawur.

14th. With regard to artillery, six guns have been determined

on. They are enough. More will not be given. Secondly, the three mule guns will be given.

15th. The spare arms shall be given to Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan.

16th. The hostages to be left here, and these persons with their families—General Sale, Captains Sturt, Boyd, and Anderson.

17th. Let General Sale go with the army to Jellalabad and his family remain here; after taking the army to Jellalabad, let him return to Caubul.

18th. If any of the Frank gentlemen have taken a Mussulman wife, she shall be given up.

If there may be questions about any article, send a note quickly by the bearer.*

All this was grievously humiliating. To treat upon such terms with such an enemy—to be so dictated to—so overborne—so insulted—was a sore trial to the manly spirit of Eldred Pottinger; who lifted up his voice against these degrading concessions, but ever remonstrated in vain. On that Christmas-day, which was not all cheerless, there arrived the encouraging intelligence that reinforcements were on their way from India. Macgregor and Mackeson wrote from Jellalabad and Peshawur, urging Macnaghten to hold out to the last; and the letters were now opened by one who had carried to the performance of Macnaghten's duties all Macnaghten's constancy and courage. Pottinger stood up manfully in council, and declared that it now became the leaders of the British army either to fling themselves into the Balla Hissar or to fight their way down to Jellalabad. But the military chiefs clung to the old idea of capitulation, and determined to cast themselves on the mercy of the Afghan Sirdars.

It is right that Pottinger should tell his own story—that the reasons he urged for the adoption of the nobler

* *MS. Records.* This memorandum seems to be based on the "Remarks" appended to the preceding document.

course should be well understood: "On that day," he writes, in his report from Budeeabad, "we received a tender from Mahomed Oosman Khan, offering to escort the army to Peshawur for the sum of five lakhs of rupees, as had been offered him (he said) by Sir W. Macnaghten. At the same time, letters from Captains Macgregor and Mackeson were received, urging Sir William to hold out, and informing us of the reinforcements which were on their way from India. The information from the city showed that feuds were running high there, and that Shah Soojah appeared to be getting up a respectable party for himself. When I informed General Elphinstone of these facts, he summoned a council of war, consisting of Brigadier Shelton, Brigadier Anquetil, Lieut.-Colonel Chambers, Captain Bellew, and Captain Grant. At the Major-General's request I laid the above-mentioned facts, and the enemy's tenders, before these officers, and also my own opinion that we should not treat with the enemy, because—*firstly*, I had every reason to believe that the enemy were deceiving us; *secondly*, I considered it our duty to hold aloof from all measures which would tie the hands of government as to its future acts; and *thirdly*, that we had no right to sacrifice so large a sum of public money (amounting to nineteen lakhs) to purchase our own safety—or to order other commanding officers to give up the trusts confided to them—for it was especially laid down by writers on international law, that a general had no authority to make any treaty, unless he were able to enforce the conditions, and that he could not treat for the future, but only for the present. The council of war, however, unanimously decided that remaining at Caubul and forcing a retreat were alike impracticable, and that nothing remained for us but endeavouring to release the army, by agreeing to the tenders offered by the enemy;

and that any sum, in addition to what had already been promised by Sir William Macnaghten, if it tended to secure the safety of the army, would be well expended, and that our right to negotiate on these terms was proved by Sir William Macnaghten having agreed to them before his assassination. Under these circumstances, as the Major-General coincided with the officers of the council, and refused to attempt occupying the Balla Hissar; as his second in command, who had been in there, declared it impracticable, I considered it my duty, notwithstanding my repugnance to and disapproval of the measure, to yield, and attempt to carry on a negotiation. For the reasons of the military authorities, I must refer you to themselves.”*

The statement of the chief military authority is to the same effect, but it does not deal largely in “reasons.” The plan recommended by Major Pottinger was pronounced to be “impracticable.” “On the 26th,” says General Elphinstone, “Major Pottinger received letters from Captain Macgregor and Captain Mackeson, addressed to the late Envoy, announcing the march of strong reinforcements from India. He also received a tender from Mahomed Oosman Khan to escort the troops to Peshawur himself for five lakhs of rupees. Shortly after, the Naib Ameer Mahomed Khan came into cantonments with the verbal agreement to the amendments proposed to the renewed treaty, and brought with him a Cashmere merchant and several Hindoo Shroffs to negotiate bills payable to the several chiefs, on the verbal promise of the late Envoy, amounting to about 14 lakhs of rupees. The proposal was submitted to the council of war composed as above. Major Pottinger informed the council that he considered any treaty with the chiefs as exceedingly doubtful, and that he thought it was our duty

* *Report of Major Eldred Pottinger: MS. Records.*

either to hold out, or to force a retreat to Jellalabad, so as, in no way, to bind the hands of our government by promising to evacuate the country, or to waste so much public money to save our own lives and property under such doubtful circumstances of faith being kept with us. The council, one and all, were of opinion that Major Pottinger's views were impracticable—that we could not hold out for want of provisions, and from having surrendered the forts commanding cantonments; and that we could not force a retreat to Jellalabad; also, that it was better to pay any sum of money than sacrifice the troops then at Caubul. It was consequently determined, *nem. con.*, that Major Pottinger should enter into negotiations and pay the money to the different chiefs, which was accordingly done.”*

* Shelton's reasons are given elsewhere. Pottinger says, in another letter, that it was mainly the Brigadier's opposition that prevented the occupation of the Balla Hissar;—the passage is on other accounts worth quoting: “There are many points that my character requires me to explain, particularly that we continued our negotiations with the enemy in direct opposition to my advice, and that we were prevented from going into the Balla Hissar by the obstinacy of Brigadier Shelton, who declared the attempt impracticable. The General, from his illness, was incapable of making up his mind, and the constant assertion of the impossibility by his second in command, outweighed the entreaties of the Envoy when alive (who was always afraid to commit himself in military matters), and of mine after; and a retreat on you (Jellalabad) was the only thing they would hear of; and, notwithstanding that I pointed out the very doubtful character of any engagement we might make with the heads of the insurgents, the probability they could not make it good; and begged that

they would spare us the dishonour and government the loss which any negotiation must entail. In a council of war held at the General's house—Shelton, Anquetil, Chambers, Grant, and Bellew present, every one voted to the contrary; so seeing I could do nothing, consented. At the time we had but two courses open to us, which; in my opinion, promised a chance of saving our honour and part of the army. One was to occupy the Balla Hissar, and hold it till spring. By this we should have had the best chance of success. The other was to have abandoned our camp and baggage and encumbrances, and forced our way down. This was perilous but practicable. However, I could not persuade them to sacrifice baggage; and that was eventually one of the chief causes of our disasters. You may conceive my anxiety to have this properly made known to government. I am more anxious on the General's account, if it be possible, than my own, for the noble courage and resignation with which he bears himself under such a load of misfortune and physical suffering (an attack of rheu-

"As soon as this was decided upon," says Pottinger, "I commenced negotiating. The enemy's first demand (on complying with which they promised to agree to the terms we offered on the 25th) was that we should settle with the Hindoos they brought forward regarding the payment of the money the Envoy had promised, *i.e.*, which the council of war had decided should be paid. * * * I would willingly have avoided the payment of such; but the enemy, by stopping our supplies, obliged me to suffer the imposition, as the military authorities were urgent to prevent a renewal of hostilities, cost what it might. These sums were promised in the name of Sir William Macnaghten, by his agent (the Naib Ameer), to the different chiefs to bring about a treaty and support it when formed. Major-General Elphinstone recollected the Envoy having informed him of his having authorised the agent to make the promises, as also did Captain Skinner."*

Captain Lawrence, who since his seizure at the fatal conference, had resided in the house of Akbar Khan in the city, was sent for to draw the bills, and on the 27th of December came into cantonments. Fourteen lakhs of rupees were then signed away. Then came a more

matic gout in the joints of each hand, and a shot through the buttock) makes a man's heart bleed that he should have been fated to hold such a command when so incompetent from disease; and seconded so badly, that the second-in-command would never give advice but to oppose that of the other."—[*Major Pottinger to Captain Macgregor: MS. Records.*]

The following passage is the only one in Shelton's statement that relates to the final negotiations:—"Soon after this (the death of the Envoy) arrangements, or rather agreements, were entered into for our retreat, and for a protecting force to

accompany us and supply us with provisions on the road. The refusal of the Afghans to hire their cattle, and sinister reports, fully convinced me what that protection would be. Indeed, many friendly towards us frankly forewarned us to prepare for the worst. My opinion was to march early (by loading the baggage at moonrise), at 5 A.M., and when once out of cantonments to depend on ourselves, and never to halt, except merely to take refreshments for a couple of hours, and so to renew the march."—[*MS. Records.*]

* *Major Pottinger's Budeeabad Report.*

dreadful concession. The enemy demanded our guns. All but six field-pieces, which were to be suffered to accompany the retreating force, were now to be given up to the triumphant Afghans. This was the sorest trial that the British garrison had yet been called upon to encounter. It burnt in our humiliation as with a brand of iron. The troops chafed under this crowning indignity; and the military chiefs, when the hour of surrender came, shrunk from the mortifying necessity of giving up to a barbarous foe those muniments of war, which soldiers of all nations honour, and some almost idolise. But they could not bring themselves to risk a renewal of the conflict by openly refusing to accede to the demand. So, Pottinger hoping, perhaps, that something might yet arise to break off the negotiations, determined to procrastinate. He began by giving up the Shah's guns, by twos, on successive days; but if this alleviated the pain of the concession, it did not really soften the disgrace.

From day to day, guns, waggons, small arms, and ammunition were surrendered to the enemy. The hostages, too, were given up. Lieutenants Conolly and Airey were already in the hands of the Afghans. Now Captains Walsh and Drummond, and Lieutenant Warburton and Webb, were sent to join them in captivity.*

* On these additional hostages being sent, Captains Skinner and Mackenzie, who had been detained in the city, were released. Captains Lawrence and Mackenzie have each drawn up a narrative of the circumstances attending their capture, and their detention in the city, the former in the house of Ameen-oollah, and the latter in that of Akbar Khan. These narratives, though they have been very extensively read in Eyre's Journal, are of too much interest and importance to be omitted from such a work

as this. They will, therefore, be found in the appendix. Both the English officers owed their lives to the efforts of the chiefs, who at much personal risk defended them against the furious assaults of the *Ghazees*. "I must do Mahomed Akbar the justice to say," writes Captain Mackenzie, "that finding the *Ghazees* bent on my slaughter, even after I had reached his stirrup, he drew his sword and laid about him right manfully, for my conductor and Meerza Baoodeen Khan were obliged to press me up

The enemy were anxious to get some of the married families into their hands; but there was a general unwillingness on the part of the officers to suffer their wives and children to be cast upon the forbearance of an enemy supposed to be so cruel, so treacherous, and so unscrupulous. On the 29th, such of the sick and wounded as were believed to be unable to bear the fatigues of the march, were sent into the city; and two medical officers, Drs. Berwick and Campbell, were appointed to take charge of them.

On the 1st of January, the ratified treaty was sent in, duly bearing the seals of eighteen of the Afghan Sirdars. It appears thus in its English dress:

TRANSLATION OF A TREATY BETWEEN THE ENGLISH AUTHORITIES AT CAUBUL AND THE AFGHAN NOBLES. (DATED IN THE MONTH OF ZE-VOL-KADH.)

The cause of writing this confidential paper, and the intention of forming this unparalleled friendly treaty, is this:—That at the present happy moment, to put away strife and contention, and avert discord and enmity, the representatives of the great English nation—that is, the high of rank and respected Eldred Pottinger, the ambassador and agent of the English Government, and General Elphinstone, the commander of the English forces—have concluded a comprehensive treaty containing certain articles, which they have confided to the hands of the Afghan nobility, that by it the chain of friendship may be strengthened. And it has been settled that the Afghan nobles shall give a similar writing.

An engagement is now made by his Majesty Newaub Mahomed Zemaun Khan, King of Afghanistan, and Naib Ameen-oollah

against the wall, covering me with their own bodies, and protesting that no blow should reach me but through their persons. Pride, however, overcame Mahomed Akbar's sense of courtesy, when he thought I was safe, for he then turned round to me, and repeatedly said, in a tone of triumphant derision, 'Shuma moolk-i-ma gereed' (You'll seize my country, will you?)" The conduct of Akbar Khan and other chiefs towards Lawrence and Mackenzie may be taken as a presumptive proof that the murder of the Envoy was not designed. His seizure, however, was deliberately planned between Ameen-oollah and Akbar Khan.

Khan, and the chief nobles of Afghanistan, whose seals are affixed to and ornament this document. The articles of the treaty are as follow:—

Article 1. That the British troops shall speedily quit the territories of Afghanistan and march to India, and shall not return; and twenty-four hours after receiving the carriage-cattle the army shall start.

Article 2. That on our part the Sirdars, Oosman Khan and Shoojah-ool-dowlah Khan, be appointed to accompany the before-mentioned army to the boundaries of Afghanistan and convey it to the boundary of the Sikh territory; so that no one shall offer molestation on the road; and that carriage-cattle and provisions may be procured for it.

Article 3. That the English force at Jellalabad shall march for Peshawur before the Caubul army arrives, and shall not delay on the road.

Article 4. Having brought the force at Ghuznee in safety to Caubul, under the protection of one of the relations of Naib Amcen-oollah Khan, we will send it to Peshawur unmolested under the care of another trustworthy person.

Article 5. Since according to agreement the troops at Candahar and other parts of Afghanistan are to start quickly for India and make over those territories to our agents, we on our part appoint trustworthy persons who may provide them with provisions and protection, and preserve them from molestation.

Article 6. All goods and property, and stores and cattle, belonging to Sirdar Dost Mahomed Khan, which may be in the hands of the English, shall be given up, and none retained.

Article 7. Six English gentlemen, who remain here as our guests, shall be treated with courtesy. When the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan and the other Afghans shall arrive at Peshawur, we will allow the above-mentioned English gentlemen to depart with honour.

Article 8. After the departure of the English army according to the treaty, should assistance against foreign invasion be at any time demanded, they (the English Government) shall not delay. Between (the Governments) friendship and good-will shall exist; and we will not make a treaty with any but the above-mentioned English Government. And in case the Governor-General of

India should not agree to this proposal, we are at liberty to form an alliance with any other power.

Article 9. Should any English gentleman be unavoidably detained in Caubul, we will treat him with all respect and consideration, and on his departure dismiss him with honour.

Article 10. The English can take six horse-artillery guns and three mule guns, and the rest, by way of friendship, shall be left for our use. And all muskets and ordnance stores in the magazine shall, as a token of friendship, be made over to our agents.

Article 11. Such English soldiers as may be left sick or wounded at Caubul shall be at liberty to return to their own country on their recovery.

This is the treaty, the articles of which have been entered into between the nobles of the Mahomedan faith and the distinguished gentlemen. From which articles we will not depart. Written in the month of Ze-vol-Kadh, in the year of the Mahomedan faith 1257.

(Sealed)

MAHOMED ZEMAUN KHAN.	KHAN MAHOMED KHAN.
MEER HAJEE KHAN.	ABDOOL KHALIK KHAN.
SEKUNDUR KHAN.	AMEEN-OOLLAH KHAN.
DARWEESH KHAN.	MEER ASLAN KHAN.
ALLEE KHAN	SUMUD KHAN.
MAHOMED AKBAR KHAN.	MAHOMED NASIR KHAN.
MAHOMED OOSMAN KHAN.	ABDOOLLAH KHAN.
GHOLAM AHMED KHAN.	GHUFFOOR KHAN.
GHOLAM MAHOMED KHAN.	MEER ALTEB KHAN.

Such were the terms of the treaty under which the British commanders consented to evacuate Afghanistan. There is nothing more painful in all this painful history than the progress of the negotiations which resulted in the accomplishment of this treaty. The tone of the enemy was arrogant, dictatorial, and insulting; whilst the language of our diplomatists was that of submission and self-abasement. It is so rare a thing for English-

men to throw themselves upon the clemency and forbearance of an insolent foe, that when we see our officers imploring the Afghan chiefs "not to overpower the weak with suffering," we contemplate the sad picture of our humiliation with as much astonishment as shame. The disgrace rests on the military commanders. Pottinger, had he not been overruled in council, would have snapped asunder the treaty before the faces of the chiefs, and appealed again to the God of Battles.

There were other things, too, to humble us. The state of affairs in cantonments was something very grievous to contemplate. The Ghazees hovering round the walls were insulting our people at their very gates, and bearding them at the very muzzles of their guns. Intercepting the supplies of grain which the commissariat had purchased with so much difficulty, they drove off the cattle and ill-treated their attendants. The chiefs declared that they had no power to prevent these outrages, and told the British authorities that they should order the garrison to fire upon all who molested them. Officers and men alike were burning to chastise the wretches who thus insulted their misfortunes; but they were not suffered to fire a shot. The Afghans had triumphed over us so long with impunity that they now believed the Feringhees had sunk into hopeless cowardice, and had become as patient of injury and insult as a herd of broken-spirited slaves.*

* The following extracts from Captain Johnson's Journal will show better than anything else the indignities to which they were subjected: "*December 28.*—Very busy, buying camels and yaboos—the price of the former 160 rupees each. The Ghazees still infest our gates and insult us in every possible way—stop our supplies coming in from the town, and abuse and ill-treat those who bring

them. No notice taken by our military leader, although our officers and soldiers are burning for revenge. Several of my native friends from the city come daily to see me, and all agree, without one dissenting voice, that we have brought the whole of our misfortunes upon ourselves, through the apathy and imbecility displayed at the commencement of the outbreak. They also tell me that

All this was very hard to bear. Other trials, too, were upon them. All who had friends in the city—and many of our officers had among the Caubulees faithful and long-tried friends—were now receiving from them alarming intimations of the dangers that threatened them on the retreat. It was no secret, indeed, either in the city or in cantonments, that the promises of the chiefs were not to be depended on, and that treachery was brewing for the destruction of our wretched force. Mohun Lal warned Pottinger that the chiefs were not to be believed, and that unless their sons accompanied the army as hostages, it would be attacked upon the road. To this Pottinger replied: “The chiefs have signed the treaty, and their

our safety on the retreat depends solely on ourselves—that no dependence is to be placed on the promises of any of the chiefs, and more especially Mahomed Akbar Khan. Every one of them will now, that they are in a measure paid before hand, do his utmost to destroy us. *December 30.*—A body of Ghazees made a rush at the rear gate of cantonments; but did not effect an entrance. More guns and ammunition made over to the enemy, or what are called our new allies. Precious *allies*, who are only waiting the opportunity to annihilate us! *December 31.*—The chiefs say they cannot control their men, and that if their people misbehave themselves at our gates, or around our walls, we must fire upon them. No orders, however, given by General Elphinstone to punish our insulting foe, who naturally attribute our forbearance to dastardly cowardice, and take every opportunity of taunting us with it. The error lies with our leader, not with our troops. Several camels laden with grain plundered close to the Secah-Sung gateway, within a few paces of a gun loaded with grape, and a large guard of Europeans and Natives. No steps taken to recover

the plundered grain or punish the offenders. How we must be despised by our miserable foe! Mahomed Zemaun Khan sent in word that some of the chiefs will be in attendance to escort us to Jellalabad to-morrow. In the evening another message came that we must halt another day. Every day's delay increases our difficulties on the road. *January 1, 1842.*—New Year's Day! God grant that we may never see such another. My kind friends, Naib Shureef, and Khan and Ali Reza Khan (both Kuzzulbashies), sent me in secretly some very excellent cakes to carry with me on the road, as we shall not get a particle of firewood for cooking for a distance of ninety miles, ere we can get into a milder climate. How dreary a prospect we have before us—having to traverse ninety miles, and the greater part of this distance through snow now upwards of a foot deep, and the thermometer at night below zero. Some negotiations still going on. All the firewood that was laid in for the winter's consumption expended, and almost every tree in cantonments cut down. They had long ago been stripped of their bark, and everything eatable, for the purpose of feeding our starving cattle.’—[MS.]

sons accompany us. As for attacking us on the road, we are in the hands of God, and him we trust."* Again, Mohun Lal wrote that the troops would be attacked as soon as they quitted cantonments; but it was too late now to recede. Other warning notes of still more ominous import were sounded at this time. Moollah Ahmed Khan told Captain Johnson that Akbar Khan had sworn that he would obtain possession of the English ladies as a pledge for the safe return of his own wives and family; and annihilate every soldier of the British army, with the exception of one man, who should reach Jellalabad to tell the story of the massacre of all his comrades.†

But to those who pondered well the dangers that threatened the retreating force in the gloomy defiles between Caubul and Jellalabad, there was something more terrible still than the vindictive treachery of the Afghan tribes. Ever since the 18th of December, snow had been falling heavily at intervals—sometimes from morning to evening—with terrible perseverance. It was now lying more than ankle-deep upon the ground. Already had the Sepoys and the camp-followers begun to faint under the cruel sufferings of a frosty winter, fearfully aggravated by the exhaustion of all the firewood in their reach. The trees in cantonments had already been cut down and consumed. What was once a flourishing grove or orchard (for they were mainly fruit-trees) had now become a desert. But the sufferings which these wretched men, transplanted from the torrid plains of Hindostan, were now enduring in the Caubul cantonment, seemed but faintly to foreshadow the misery of a long march through the dreadful snow. Even to the hardy people of the north such a march, it was known, must be a sore trial; but to the weak and effeminate strangers

* *Letter of Mohun Lal to Mr. Colvin: MS. Records.*

† *Captain Johnson's Journal: MS. Records.*

from the plains of Hindostan, who had followed our fortunes into those dreary regions, it seemed to threaten nothing short of absolute extermination.

Those few first days of January were days of painful doubt and anxiety.* Every preparation for the march had been made by the garrison. For some time our officers had been gathering together and securing such property as they could take with them, and destroying what they were compelled to abandon. Every night, since the commencement of the new year, they had retired to rest, believing that the army would commence its march on the following morning; but the movement was delayed day after day, because the chiefs had not completed their promised arrangements for the safe conduct of the force. At last, on the evening of the 5th of January, the engineer-officer received instructions actually to commence the work, which he had been so long in readiness to accomplish. He was ordered to cut an opening through the rampart-walls of the cantonment to admit the egress of the troops, more rapidly and less confusedly, than they could pass out through the gates. The chiefs had not sent the promised safeguard; but, contrary to the advice of Major Pottinger,† the military authorities determined to march out of their entrenchments. And so, on the following morning, the British

* The letters written at this time from Caubul were full of gloomy forebodings. On the 4th of January, Captain Lawrence wrote: "The troops march to-morrow; treachery is feared. We look to Jellalabad for assistance. We have no money and no friends." Lady Sale wrote not more hopefully, describing the treaty as a disgraceful one: "Guns, ammunition, money, and all the forts have been given up; and likewise six hostages. All the sick have been sent to the city—to the new King. We are to depart without a guard, with-

out money, without provisions, without wood." At the same time, Lieutenant Sturt wrote: "The day in the end will be the King's. If we march we shall fight but once; the result is in the hands of God."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† "On the 6th of January, the military authorities refused to wait for the safeguard; and notwithstanding my advice to the contrary, marched out of our entrenchments."—[*Major Pottinger's Budeeabad Report: MS. Records.*]

force, beaten and disgraced, commenced its ill-fated retreat towards the provinces of Hindostan.

I have commented upon the various incidents of the Caubul insurrection as they have arisen, one by one, to claim the attention of the reader; and little now remains to be said in explanation of the causes which conduced to the calamitous and disgraceful defeat of a British army by an undisciplined and disunited enemy, who had no artillery to bring into the field. Whatever more remote causes of this lamentable failure may be found elsewhere, it is impossible to conceal or to disguise the one galling fact, that the British army at Caubul was disastrously beaten because it was commanded by an incapable chief. Whether that chief would have beaten the enemy if the military arrangements for which he was not responsible had been better ordered—if the site of the cantonments had been more judiciously chosen, and its defences more effectively constructed, if all our magazines and godowns had been well located and well protected,—may still be an open question; but it appears to me that there is no question as to whether a commanding officer of the right stamp would have triumphed over these difficulties, and beaten the enemy in spite of them. The Caubul cantonments were very badly situated, and very ill-constructed for purposes of defence; but if our troops had been commanded by an officer with a robust frame, strong nerves, a clear understanding, and a proper knowledge of his business, as the chief of a mixed army of British and Hindostanee troops, they would have crushed the insurrection in a few hours, and demonstrated the irresistible power of British valour and British discipline.

It has been said that the British army was not beaten out of Caubul, but that it was *starved* out of Caubul. This is a belief that I would willingly encourage, if I

could only bring my judgment to embrace it. But the fact is, that the army was driven out of Caubul for want of supplies, only because the troops would not fight, or were not suffered to fight, to obtain them. The Commissariat officers would have fed the troops, if the military authorities had not shamefully sacrificed their supplies,—if they had not ignominiously lost what was already in store; and ignominiously refused to make an effort to obtain fresh supplies from the surrounding country. The troops, indeed, fought neither to keep their food when they had it, nor to procure food when they had none. There was an alacrity only in losing. The imbecility which sacrificed the Bengal Commissariat Fort, on the 5th of November, and the miserable abandonment of the expedition to Khoja Rewash, on the 9th of December, are equally apt illustrations of the truth, that, if the army was starved out of Caubul, it was only because it courted starvation.

This is a very humiliating confession, but it is impossible, without a sacrifice of truth for the sake of administering to our national vanity, to avoid the mortifying conclusion that the Caubul army wanted food, only because it wanted vigour and energy to obtain it. If General Elphinstone had thrown half as much heart into his work as Captain Johnson threw into his, the army would not have been starved out of Caubul. There is nothing sadder than the spectacle of a fine army sacrificed by the imbecility of an incapable general, and nothing more painful than to write of it. But such humiliating revelations are not without their uses. They operate in the way of warning. Never again, after this frightful illustration of the evils of a vicious system of routine, will the lives of sixteen thousand men, and the honour of a great nation, be placed in the hands of a senile commander, crippled by disease and enfeebled by suffering. It was General Elphinstone's

misfortune that he was sent to Caubul. It was Lord Auckland's fault that he sent him there. General Elphinstone knew that he was incapable of performing worthily the duties of such a command, and he took the earliest opportunity of applying for relief from a burden of responsibility which he was not able to bear. Lord Auckland knew that he was incapable, for the attention of the Governor-General was strongly called to the fact; but he sent the infirm old General to Caubul, in spite of the representations that were made to him by men less jealous of the integrity of the roster than of the honour of their country. The British army was beaten at Caubul, because it was commanded by General Elphinstone; and it was commanded by General Elphinstone, because Lord Auckland decreed that it should be so.

General Elphinstone has left upon record a declaration of his belief that if he had been more worthily supported he would not have been beaten at Caubul. So long as he held the chief command in his own hands, he—and he alone—was responsible for all the operations of the army. He never relinquished the command. Though he did not take the field in person, every order emanated from him. To him the Envoy addressed himself; with him the Envoy took counsel. It is possible that if the second-in-command had been an officer of a different stamp, the army would not have been so disastrously and ignominiously beaten; but this admission does not affect the question of responsibility. Brigadier Shelton, throughout the siege, held a subordinate situation. He was immediately under Elphinstone's orders; and though he may be chargeable with certain individual miscarriages—with certain errors in the executive management of details—he is not chargeable with the great comprehensive failure which has plunged his

country into such a sea of disgrace. Of Shelton's faults I have not been unmindful; but when I have admitted all his perverseness, his arrogance, his contumacy, and expressed my belief that there was not another man in the British army so unfitted by nature for the post he occupied under such a General, the admission amounts to little more than this: that Brigadier Shelton was not the man to supply the deficiencies of General Elphinstone. It is only because General Elphinstone was so incapable himself that we come to canvass at all the merits of his second-in-command. History does not trouble itself much about seconds-in-command when the chiefs are fit for their posts.

Unquestionably Elphinstone was not well supported. Macnaghten, in emphatic language, described the troops as "a pack of despicable cowards." On more than one occasion they forgot that they were British troops, and turned their backs upon the enemy. They did not fight as they would have fought if they had been well commanded. The commander had less reason to complain of his troops than the troops had to complain of their commander. It was the faint-heartedness of the commander at the outset of the insurrection that dispirited and unnerved the troops. If Elphinstone, on the 2nd of November, had struck a vigorous blow at the then incipient rebellion, and proved himself, by his energy and resolution, worthy of the confidence of the troops, they would have had confidence in him and in themselves. But they were held in restraint by the backwardness of their leader; the froward feeling that then inspired them was crushed and deadened. There was nothing to encourage and to animate them, but everything to dishearten and depress. They saw that the enemy were suffered to triumph over and insult them—that the worst indignities were unresented, the vilest outrages

unpunished. Thus abased, they soon lost their self-respect, and forgot what was due to their colours and their country.

Brigadier Shelton has attributed to physical causes the deterioration of the troops; but it is rather to moral than to physical causes that that deterioration is to be ascribed. The troops would have borne up against continued harassing duty in cantonments—against cold, hunger, and fatigue; they would have kept up a brave heart under the sorest physical trials, if there had been no moral influences to sicken and to chill. They bore, indeed, their outward sufferings without complaining. Cold, hunger, and fatigue they could endure without a murmur; but the supineness of those who suffered them to be robbed and insulted under the very shadow of their guns filled them with burning indignation, which, in time, was succeeded by a reaction of sullen despondency. They felt that they were sacrificed to the imbecility of their commander; and, in time, under the sure process of moral deterioration, they became in all respects worthy of their chief.

Examples of individual heroism were not wanting. Wherever Englishmen congregate, there are surely to be found brave hearts and resolute spirits amongst them. There were many in that Caubul garrison who bore themselves throughout the perilous season of their beleaguering in a manner worthy of the chivalry of the empire. When the retreating force commenced its miserable march towards the British provinces, it left behind it the remains of many brave men who had fallen nobly on the field of battle; and many brave men were now bracing themselves up in the desperate resolution to sell their lives dearly to the enemy, if treachery were at work for their destruction. But they who had been most eager to counsel a vigorous course of action, and

who had felt most deeply the humiliation into which the feebleness of their chief had sunk them, were mostly officers of the lower grades; and though the opinions of captains and subalterns were sought, and offered when not sought, in a manner unprecedented in the annals of British warfare, they had no power to direct the current of events or to avert the evils which they clearly foresaw. Even Pottinger, with all the influence of recognised official position, and the prestige of an heroic character, could only lift up his voice in remonstrance against the sacrifice of national honour involved in the humiliating treaty with the Afghan Sirdars. The military chiefs were fixed in their determination to abandon Afghanistan, and to leave Shah Soojah to his fate.

BOOK VI.

[1841—1842.]

CHAPTER I.

[November, 1841—January, 1842.]

Sale's Brigade—Evacuation of Gundamuck—Skirmishes with the Enemy—
Occupation of Jellalabad—State of the Defences—Successful Sallies—
The Fortifications repaired—Disastrous Tidings from Caubul—Summons
to Surrender—Arrival of Dr. Brydon.

WHILST Elphinstone was flinging himself into the snares of the enemy at Caubul, Sale was holding out manfully at Jellalabad. Whether the latter ought not to have returned to Caubul, or, if such a movement were impossible, to have stood his ground at Gundamuck, is a question which military critics will long continue to discuss. That the appearance of this brigade at Caubul would have changed the aspect of affairs at that place, and in all probability rescued Elphinstone's unhappy force from destruction, and the national character from disgrace, there seems no reason to doubt. But it was the opinion of General Sale that his brigade could not reach Caubul. "My retracing my steps on that city," he says, "was, in a military sense, impracticable, since the first inevitable

sacrifice would have been of the lives of 300 sick and wounded, whom I could not have left in *depôt* with the treasonable irregulars at Gundamuck, whilst my cattle was unequal to the transport of my camp-equipage, and my ammunition insufficient for protracted operations. In the position which I occupied, I could not absolutely command a day's provisions, or even water, and should have been hemmed in on every side by hostile tribes, amounting to thirty or forty thousand men, part of whom might have seized Jellalabad, and reduced it to ashes; or, holding it, have left me no alternative but a disastrous retreat to Peshawur. I therefore came to the resolution of anticipating any movement of this kind, and, by possessing myself of Jellalabad, establishing a point on which the force at Caubul might retire if hardly pressed, and restoring a link in the chain of communication with our provinces."

This was written five months after the brigade had abandoned its position at Gundamuck. It does not, however, differ much from the statement of reasons sent to General Elphinstone only as many days afterwards.* But the fact is, that those few days had given a very dif-

* In this letter, written from Jellalabad (Nov. 15), General Sale says: "I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, requiring the force under my command to move again upon Caubul. In reply, I beg to represent that the whole of my camp-equipage has been destroyed; that the wounded and sick have increased to upwards of 300; that there is no longer a single *depôt* of provisions on the route; and that the carriage of the force is not sufficient to bring on one day's rations with it. I have, at the same time, positive information that the whole country is in arms, and ready to oppose us in the defiles between this city and Caubul, whilst my ammuni-

tion is insufficient for more than two such contests as I should assuredly have to sustain for six days at least. With my present means I could not force the passes of either Jugdulluck or Koord Caubul, and even if the *debris* of my brigade did reach Caubul, I am given to understand that I should find the troops now garrisoning it without the means of subsistence. Under these circumstances, a regard for the honour and interests of our government compels me to adhere to my plan already formed, of putting this place into a state of defence, and holding it, if possible, until the Caubul force falls back upon me, or succours arrive from Peshawur or India."

ferent complexion to the aspect of affairs. It was on the 10th of November that Captain Macgregor, who for days had been perplexed by alarming rumours of native origin, received the first authentic intelligence of the outbreak at Caubul, coupled with an urgent requisition from the Envoy to bring back Sale's brigade. Some, at least, of the military objections urged against the movement by the General had not then begun to exist. The irregulars were not then known to be treasonable. The surrounding country was not then known to be hostile. Food was believed to be procurable. The brigade was at this time halted in the valley of Gundamuck. There was no more fertile spot than this between Caubul and Jellalabad. Orchards and vineyards, green fields and rippling streams, refreshed the eyes and gladdened the hearts of men who, for many weary days, had been toiling through arid defiles, under the shadow of dreary walls of rock. Here the brigade had encamped itself on the 30th of October, and looked forward to a brief season of repose.

Everything, indeed, at this time wore a most encouraging aspect. Provisions were freely coming into camp, and the Ghilzye chiefs were making their submission. "On the 31st," says Captain Macgregor, in his narrative of these events, "Burkutt Khan paid me a visit, and brought with him two of the rebel chiefs, Sadad Meer and Sir Biland Khan; they had returned to their allegiance, and delivered over to me sixteen camel loads of property (not very valuable) which had been plundered from some Rehwaree merchants; this property I made over to their owners. Aghur Khan Sahuk, a Ghilzye chief of considerable influence, and Attah Mahomed Khan Sahuk, joined me at Gundamuck, and established their Thanahs for the protection of the Caubul road within their respective boundaries from Seh Baba to near Jugdulluck. Burkutt Khan had re-

posted his 'Thanahs at Jugdulluck, and at this time there seemed to be a great promise of the Ghilzye country being shortly tranquillised."*

There was one exception, however, to the general amity which the chiefs seemed now inclined to offer to Macgregor. "On the 3rd of November," writes that officer, "I was informed that Meer Afzool Khan Urz-Beggee had fled from Caubul, and had joined the rebels, and was then at Ghanni, endeavouring to excite the Khogrannees and Ghannees to rebel against us. Meer Afzool had a fort and extensive lands at Mama Kheil, about two miles distant from our encampment at Gundamuck, from which he had removed his family and portable property, and might chupao our camels when at graze, stop our supplies, and molest us in many ways with impunity. I had information that the party which was intended to garrison the fort had not yet reached it; and by our moving at once on it, we should meet with less resistance at that time, than would be offered a few days subsequently; on the other hand, if the British troops took possession of this fort, our position at Gundamuck would be greatly strengthened; I therefore requested Major-General Sir Robert Sale to capture the fort in question. The troops marched against it on the 5th, found it had been evacuated, a party of Ferris's Jezailchees and fifty of Dowson's Hazarbash, under Captain Gerrard, having been left in occupation of it. The troops returned to Gundamuck the following day. A quantity of grain, which had been left in the fort by the enemy and had been stored outside, fell into our possession."†

Up to the day, indeed, on which Macgregor received the pressing solicitations of the Envoy to bring back

* Captain Macgregor's Report: MS. Records.

† Report of Captain Macgregor: MS. Records.

Sale's brigade to Caubul, circumstances, since the arrival of the force at Gundamuck, had been all in its favour. When, therefore, Macnaghten's letter was received, and they took counsel together as to the course it then became them to pursue, some at least of those strong reasons against the movement on Caubul, which Sale set forth in his official letters, had not yet been forced into being. A council of war was held, and the members of it were divided in opinion; but the majority pronounced against the movement for the rescue of Elphinstone's force. It was determined that the brigade should throw itself into Jellalabad. There was a middle course open to them—the retention of their position at Gundamuck; but it seems to have found no favour in their eyes. Had Sale's force remained in the valley of Gundamuck, it might have saved Elphinstone's army from annihilation on its fatal January retreat. As long as it was encamped there, the tendency of the Ghilzye chiefs was towards the establishment of friendly relations with the British, but no sooner had we determined to abandon our position, than the whole country broke out into hostility, and the passes were sealed.*

On the 11th of November the brigade commenced its march towards Jellalabad. Sale had wisely determined to move with as little encumbrance of baggage as possible. He was partly, indeed, compelled to this by the depredations of the tribes who had swept off the bulk of his cattle whilst the animals were grazing on the plain. The injury inflicted upon us by their predatory adroitness was of a very doubtful character. The taste for

* It has been said (*Calcutta Review*, vol. xiv.) that the instructions sent to Sale were of such a character as to throw a large amount of responsibility upon him; and that Sale always shrank from responsibility,—

but the letters from the Envoy to Macgregor were couched in unqualified and unconditional language, and the official letter from Elphinstone ordered Sale to return "at all risks."

baggage is ordinarily so strong that little short of absolute necessity compels its abandonment. Sale was forced to move lightly out of Gundamuck, and he found the advantage of the absence of the usual impediments before he had been long on the march.

To leave, however, any property at Gundamuck was virtually to sacrifice it. To the care of the Shah's irregulars posted in the cantonment all that could not be carried away was now consigned. As soon as Sale's brigade had commenced its march to Jellalabad the cantonment was attacked. True to their character, the Janbaz, who seem to have been raised for the express purpose of going over to the enemy, did it with their wonted address. The property left at Gundamuck fell into the hands of the Afghans; the cantonment was burnt to the ground; and all the surrounding country rose against us in open revolt.

Without any serious opposition, the march to Jellalabad was accomplished. On the morning of the 12th, however, soon after the brigade got under arms in the grey twilight, the tribes were seen clustering on the steep hills on either side, and soon poured themselves down on the rear-guard, vainly striving to sweep off the baggage. A running skirmish, which lasted for some miles, and brought out the fine qualities of our troops, their admirable discipline and steadiness under fire, the gallantry of their bearing, and the rapidity of their movements, ended in the complete dispersion of the depredators, and secured the safety of the remainder of their march. Clever were the manœuvres by which on that day Dennie drew the enemy into his toils, and heavy the retribution which descended upon them. Placing his cavalry in ambush, he brought up his infantry to the attack, ordered them to advance firing, and then wheeled them about, as though in panic flight.

The stratagem succeeded to admiration. The enemy, after a brief pause of wonderment, believed they had accomplished a great victory, sent up a wild shout, and then rushed in pursuit of the flying Feringhees. They were soon in the clear open space to which Dennie had designed to lure them. The cavalry, whom they had laughed at on the hills, able now to operate freely, dashed at them with sudden fury. The slaughter was tremendous; the rout was complete. It was said of the British horsemen that day that "their right arms were wearied with the blows which they struck; and the quantity of dead that might be seen scattered over the face of the valley proved that they had not struck at random."*

On the morning of the 13th of November Sale's brigade took possession of Jellalabad. The movement took the Afghans by surprise. They had believed that the Feringhees were making the best of their way to the provinces of Hindostan; and now their entrance into the city struck a panic into the hearts of the inhabitants. As the regiments marched in, the citizens fled out in dismay. Everything was abandoned to the British troops. There was no need to fire a shot or to draw a sabre. Sale's brigade had now become the garrison of Jellalabad.†

Scarcely, however, had Sale made himself master of the place before it was surrounded by yelling crowds, who threatened death to the infidels if they did not at once abandon the town. The utmost caution was now necessary. The place, though surrounded by fortifications, was absolutely without any real defences; and the

* "Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan." By the Rev. G. R. Gleig, Chaplain to the Forces.

† The place, at the request of Captain Macgregor, was officially given over to the British garrison by the nominal Governor, Abdool Rahman,

who ruled the Jellalabad district in the name of Shah Soojah. Abdool Rahman continued for some time to reside in the town under Captain Macgregor's protection. — [Captain Macgregor's Report: MS. Records.]

troops within its dilapidated walls and its filled-up ditches, were almost as much exposed as in the open country. The extent of the works was very great, and it was quite impossible to man them. But guards were posted at all the gates; and a strong piquet planted in a central position, and ordered to hold itself in readiness to send supports to any point from which the sound of firing might proceed.* These arrangements made, the remainder of the troops were suffered to lie down to rest by companies, with their officers beside them, whilst Sale summoned the commanders of regiments and detachments to a council of war.

The question to be determined was this. There was the extensive, ill-defended city of Jellalabad; and in the midst of it was the Balla Hissar or citadel, surrounded by a wall, sufficiently extensive to enclose the brigade without inconvenience, but yet not so extensive as to exhaust our means of defence. It was now debated whether it would be more expedient to abandon the town and concentrate our troops in the Balla Hissar, or to hold possession of the former. Weighty and very apparent were the arguments in favour of the occupation of the citadel; and for a time the council seemed inclined towards the adoption of that securer course; but to Dennie and others it was clear, that the abandonment of the city would be a virtual acknowledgment of weakness, and that it would have a far better political effect, as it would a more becoming military appearance, to hold the city itself, than to be cooped up within the walls of the citadel. And so it was at last determined that the city should be held, and the enemy resolutely defied.

But to hold the city it was necessary that the defences should be repaired. Well might Sale look with dismay at their condition, and almost regard it as a wild hope ever

* "*Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan.*" By the Rev. G. R. Gleig.

to look for the completion of the work that he had marked out for his little garrison. "I found the walls of Jellalabad," he said, "in a state which might have justified despair as to the possibility of defending them. The *enceinte* was far too extensive for my small force, embracing a circumference of upwards of 2300 yards. Its tracing was vicious in the extreme; it had no parapet excepting for a few hundred yards, which, there, was not more than two feet high earth; and rubbish had accumulated to such an extent about the ramparts, that there were roads in various directions across and over them into the country. There was a space of 400 yards together, on which none of the garrison could show themselves excepting at one spot: the population within was disaffected, and the whole *enceinte* was surrounded by ruined forts, walls, mosques, tombs, and gardens, from which a fire could be opened upon the defenders at twenty and thirty yards."*

The first thing now to be done was to appoint a committee of officers to examine and report upon the works of the place. On the 13th of November, Captain Broadfoot, who commanded the corps of sappers, with some other officers, went round the dilapidated works. Broadfoot alone succeeded in making the circuit of them. "Large gaps cut off the communication, or insecure footing compelled the officers to descend among the adjoining enclosures, from which it was difficult to find the way; whilst on the south side the rampart was so embedded in houses and surrounded by them, that its course could only be traced by laboriously threading the lanes of the native town. On the north side the wall rose to a very great height *towards the town*, but sloped down to the exterior in a heap of ruins almost everywhere accessible; while at the foot were houses and gardens so strongly occupied by the enemy, that during the night of the 13th

* *General Sale to Secretary to Government, April 16, 1842.*

of November our troops were unable to maintain their posts; and with the exception of the gateway, a line of four hundred yards on the northern face was without a man on the works. Had the enemy then attacked us, we must have been reduced to a street combat.”*

Broadfoot, now appointed garrison engineer, set about the work entrusted to him with all the energy and zeal for which his character was distinguished. His little corps of sappers had brought with them their pickaxes, shovels, and other working tools from Caubul; and were now ready to ply them with the heartiest good-will. There was not a soldier in garrison, European or Native, who was not eager to join in the work. Wood was to be collected; and iron was to be collected; for there were no available supplies of either. But from the ruins of old houses in the cantonment and in the town the former was extracted in sufficient quantity, and the neighbouring country supplied the latter.† Every difficulty was overcome as it arose. Impossibilities did not grow in Jellalabad.

But before our soldiers could carry on their work in safety upon the ramparts, it was necessary to give the enemy, who assembled in great force beyond the walls of the city, a taste of our military strength. The morning of the 16th of November was an exciting, and it proved to be a glorious one. On the preceding evening it had been determined that Colonel Monteith, of the 35th Bengal Infantry, a true soldier and a good officer, should take out eleven hundred men, at daybreak, and give battle to the molesting Afghans. As soon as the early dawn would suffer him to take a survey of surrounding objects, Monteith ascended to the flat house-top of one

* *Captain Broadfoot's Report* —
Jellalabad, April 16, 1842.

† “The iron,” says Broadfoot,
“was good in quality, but imperfectly

smelted, and requiring ten times as
much labour and time as English
iron.”

of the most commanding edifices in the city, and looked around, with a keen soldier's eye, upon the expanse of hill and plain, of garden and of vineyard, traced the course of the river, and marked the castles of the chiefs which dotted the adjacent country. He saw, too, what was of more importance still—the dispositions of the enemy. There seemed to be about 5000 fighting men, gathered together, some on the hill-sides, some in the enclosures on the plain; and though they were kept together by little discipline, there seemed to be some sturdy qualities about them, and they were, at all events, well armed. Monteith learnt all that could be learnt from that commanding position, and then he went down to place himself at the head of his men.

The little force was well composed and well commanded. The remaining men of the garrison were under arms; and the guns, which Monteith did not take with him, were posted on the ramparts to cover his advance. Nothing could have been more gallant or more successful than the attack. What the artillery commenced, the infantry followed up bravely, and the cavalry completed. The enemy were beaten at all points. The wretched Janbaz, who had gone over to the insurgents at Gundamuck, now met the men of the 5th Cavalry in fair fight, and were hewn down remorselessly by them. In a little time the panic was complete. The British horsemen, following up our successes, flung themselves upon the flying Afghans on the plains, and slaughtered them as they fled. Then the bugle sounded the recall: Monteith brought his men together, flushed with success, and the whole returned, in joyous spirits, to the city. The Afghans were checked at the outset of their career of insolence and intimidation, and for many a day kept themselves quietly in their homes.

Then the work of defence proceeded apace. Broad-

foot was toiling all day long to repair the decayed ramparts and clear out the ditches, which, ditches no longer, had been filled up to the consistency of thoroughfares. Abbott, who had been appointed commissary of ordnance was getting his guns into position, and making up his ammunition as best he could from the materials to be found in the neighbourhood. Macgregor, with his wonted activity, was playing the part of the Commissariat officer—and playing it well—bringing all his political influence, which was great, to bear upon the important business of the collection of supplies. And so successful were his exertions—so successful were the efforts of the foraging parties, which went out from time to time in search of grain, sheep, firewood, and other essentials—that in a little while a month's provisions were in store. It is true that the men were on half-rations; but they did not work the worse for that. It was never said at Jellalabad that the soldiery were unequal to their accustomed duties because they had not their accustomed supplies of food. The gallant men who composed the garrison of Jellalabad, took their half-rations cheerfully, and cheerfully did double work.*

Not again, until the 1st of December, was the mettle of Sale's brigade tried in the open field. For some days before, the enemy had been hovering about and threatening the garrison, who, chary of their ammunition, which was running scarce, gave back nothing in reply to the desultory fire of the Afghans. But on the 1st of December they appeared in such formidable array, and grew so bold and menacing—closing in nearly and more

* Cheerfully, too, worked the Europeans without their accustomed drams. There were no ardent liquors in Jellalabad; and the consequence was, that the men enjoyed, even on half-rations, an amount of health and strength and elasticity, and preserved a regularity of discipline unknown to even the 13th, when the fire-water was served out to them.

nearly about the walls, until the workmen on the ramparts could not safely perform their accustomed duties—that Sale could no longer refrain from sending out his fighting men against them. Monteith, an officer of the Company's service, had led the attack on the 14th of November. Now, the direction of the sortie was entrusted to an officer of the Queen's army, who had already, on more than one occasion, shown his capacity for command. Dennie led out the garrison this time; and gallantly they moved to the attack. It was mid-day when they sallied out with a cheer, and fell upon their besiegers. It were scarcely truth to say that a battle was fought on that 1st of December. The affair began and ended with the rout of the Afghans. Two guns of Abbott's battery were unlimbered, and with murderous execution poured in their thick showers of grape upon the discomfited mass. They, who had of late been so bold and defiant, now fled in wild confusion, but could not escape the sabres of our cavalry, who charged them home, and drove them across the plain into the river, whilst our infantry pursued them up the hill-sides, and fell upon them with their gleaming bayonets. And so, without the loss of a single man, Dennie dispersed the investing force; and not a trace of it was to be seen on the morrow except the dead bodies on the plain.

And now, with little or no interruption, the labours of the garrison proceeded, and the works began to assume an appearance of effective defence. In fine health, in good working condition, and in an admirable state of discipline, European and Native troops alike laboured with axe and shovel, and soon saw the mud-walls rising around them. Had they thought only of themselves, they would have toiled on, in high spirits as in high health. But the worst rumours were coming in from Caubul. It was plain that their fellow-soldiers at the

capital were not achieving like honourable success. It was believed, too, that Sale and Macgregor knew more than they were willing to reveal. Men asked each other fearful questions; but beyond the leading outline of events, nothing was known that could be shaped into intelligible replies.

How it happened that such an army as that commanded by General Elphinstone had been so disastrously and disgracefully beaten in the field by an enemy of such calibre as these undisciplined Afghans, was a terrible mystery to the brave men who had been scattering their besiegers like sheep. They heard something of the want of provisions that had reduced the force to this melancholy strait; but when Sale's brigade sat down in Jellalabad it had only two days' provisions. They heard, too, that the extent and the weakness of the Caubul cantonments had paralysed the efforts of the garrison; but there, at Jellalabad, they had found their defences in a state of absolute ruin. It seemed to them easy to obtain provisions, and to build up their defences. At all events, they had done both; and the troops at Caubul were of three or four times their strength.

Half of the month of December had worn away, when a whisper went round the garrison that the Caubul force had capitulated. With mingled feelings of incredulity and indignation the humiliating intelligence was received. Sale and Macgregor knew only too well how Elphinstone and Shelton had been throwing away chance after chance of rescuing their miserable troops from destruction. But it was not wise to damp the spirits of their own gallant and successful garrison by any revelations of the unhappy manner in which their old comrades had been sacrificed at Caubul. When, therefore, on the 17th of December, it was known that some disastrous intelligence had been received from the capital, it was slowly believed that the

main body of the British army in Afghanistan had thrown itself on the mercy of a barbarous foe.

But soon other intelligence of a grievous and afflicting character was conveyed to the garrison. At first it appeared only in the shape of a native rumour, which, though it seemed to swell into bulk and significance, was believed, with something perhaps of self-deception, by Macgregor, to be only a shadowy figment that he ought at once to dismiss from his mind. It was rumoured that the British Envoy at Caubul had been murdered at a conference by Akbar Khan; but Macgregor argued, when communicating, on the 30th of December, this report to the authorities below, that it was not likely Macnaghten would have gone unattended to a conference with the chiefs, or that Akbar Khan, whose father and family were in the hands of the British, would commit an act of such outrageous folly as to murder the representative of the British Government. But Macgregor's incredulity was soon dispersed. After three days of doubt, authentic tidings came in from Caubul to disquiet the hearts of the British chiefs at Jellalabad. On the second day of the new year, a letter was received from Major Pottinger, full of the most painful and disheartening intelligence. It announced the murder of Macnaghten. It announced that the Caubul force was about immediately to abandon its position, and to fall back upon Jellalabad, with every prospect of being attacked by a faithless and infuriated enemy upon the way. Into a few sentences of terrible significance was crowded the record of these melancholy events. The letter was written on Christmas-day:

Caubul, December 25, 1841.

MY DEAR MACGREGOR,

We have had a sad Comedy of Errors, or rather tragedy here. Macnaghten was called out to a conference and murdered.

We have interchanged terms on the ground he was treating on for leaving the country; but things are not finally settled. However, we are to fall back on Jellalabad to-morrow or next day. In the present disturbed state of the country we may expect opposition on the road, and we are likely to suffer much from the cold and hunger, as we expect to have no carriage for tents and superfluities. I have taken charge of the Mission. Mackenzie, Lawrence, and Conolly are all seized. The first two I fear for. The latter is quite safe. The cantonment is now attacked.

Yours, very truly,

ELDRED POTTINGER.

With deep emotion the officers now discussed the dangers of this fearful retreat through the snow, and the too probable treachery of the chiefs; and there were those among them who predicted that Elphinstone's army would be cut to pieces by the enemy, or destroyed by the snow almost to a man. All this was very discouraging; but the Jellalabad garrison were not in a temper to be easily cast down. On they went from day to day, working cheerfully at the defences—never fearing for themselves, and, in spite of the evil prophecies of a few amongst them, hoping the best for their miserable comrades.

So passed the first week of January. To Sale and Macgregor they were days of intense anxiety. Eagerly as they looked for cheering intelligence from Caubul, nothing came to refresh them with new hopes. On the 8th of January, another letter from Pottinger, dated the 28th of December, was received by Macgregor. It was written in French, as there were men in the enemy's camp who could read and interpret English;*

* I append the letter itself, as well as one, also in French, written two days afterwards to Mackeson at Peshawur:

"Cabool, 28^{me} Déc., 1841.

"MON CHER MACGREGOR,

"Notre situation devient périlleuse de plus en plus; les forts à

l'entour du cantonnement ayant été rendus aux chefs, selon le traité que le feu Envoyé et Ministre avoit commencé. Nous nous trouvons dans la nécessité de renouveler les négociations depuis qu'il a été tué. Le manque de vivres, desquels ils ne nous restent que pour huit jours, et

and it announced that the position of the British force at Caubul was becoming more and more perilous—that the treaty commenced by the late Envoy was still being negotiated—that some delays had been occasioned by the difficulty, real or pretended, of providing carriage and provisions to enable the troops to commence their march; and that it was not improbable that, in spite of the promises of the chiefs, the British column would be compelled to fight its way down to Jellalabad. In conclusion, Pottinger spoke of instructions for the evacuation of Jellalabad that had been despatched by Macnaghten, but urged Macgregor to stand fast until the receipt of further orders from Caubul.

On the following day those instructions arrived. A

des moyens de transport pour nos malades et blessés, qu'ils nous ont promis de jour en jour, font autant de raisons de plus pour que nous faisons traité, s'il est possible. Mais aussi leurs promesses méritent si peu de foi, que peut-être nous serons obligés de battre de retraite sur Jellalabad; sur tout, qu'ils exigent que nous marchons par le route de Bungeish—demande que nous ne pouvons pas agréer.

“Pour ces causes alors, si vous avez reçu l'ordre de marcher du feu Envoyé et Ministre, il ne faut pas le faire à présent, mais attendre jusqu'au temps que vous recevez nouvelle ordre d'ici, quand le traité de paix sera fait.

“Votre ami,

“ELDRED POTTINGER.”

“Cantonnements à Cabool,
30^{me} de Décembre, 1841.

“MON CHER MACKESON,

“J'ai eu le plaisir de recevoir votre lettre du 12^{me} au feu Envoyé. Notre situation ici est des plus dangereuses. L'Envoyé était tué à une conférence, qui avait lieu hors d'ici, le 23 de ce mois. Quand je prenais charge je trouvais qu'il avait engagé

du part du gouvernement de quitter Afghanistan, et de donner *hostages* pour que le Dost soyait mis en liberté, aussi que pour préliminaires il avait rendu le *Balla Hissar* et les forts qui dominent les cantonnements. Ces acts et le manque des vivres faisaient les cantonnements untenable, et les quatre officiers militaires supérieurs disaient qu'il fallait résumer le traité au lieu de forcer une marche rétrograde sur Jellalabad. Nous avons aujourd'hui finis les termes du traité, et nous espérons partir d'ici demain ou après demain. De leur promesses je m'en doute, malgré que les ordres ont été expédiés pour que nos troupes quittent Candahar et Ghizny. Il faut que vous tenez ouvert le Khyber, et que vous soyez prêt nous aider le passage; car si nous ne sommes pas protégés, il nous serait impossible faire halte en route pour que les troupes se rafraichissent, sans laquelle j'ai peur qu'ils soient désorganisés.

“Votre ami,

“Ελδρεδ Ποττινγκερ.

“Après aujourd'hui j'écrirai mon nom en lettres Grecques. Lorsque le Cossid vous remettra cette lettre vous lui donnerez trois cent rupees.”

few horsemen appeared under the walls of Jellalabad, one of whom was the bearer of a letter from the English authorities at Caubul, addressed to Captain Macgregor. It contained instructions for the evacuation of Jellalabad, couched in the following words:

Caubul, December 29, 1841.

SIR,

It having been found necessary to conclude an agreement, founded on that of the late Sir W. H. Macnaghten, for the evacuation of Afghanistan by our troops, we have the honour to request that you will intimate to the officer commanding at Jellalabad, our wish that the troops now at that place should return to India, commencing their march immediately after the receipt of this letter, leaving all guns, the property of Dost Mahomed Khan, with the new Governor, as also such stores and baggage as there may not be the means of carrying away, and the provisions in store for our use on arriving at Jellalabad.

Abdool Ghuffoor Khan, who is the bearer of this letter, will render you all the assistance in his power. He has been appointed Governor of Jellalabad on the part of the existing government.

We have the honour to be, &c.,

ELDRED POTTINGER, in charge of Caubul Mission.

W. K. ELPHINSTONE, Major-General.

Macgregor laid the letter before Sale, and a council of war was held. It does not seem that there were many doubts and misgivings to agitate and perplex the brave men, who then asked each other whether they should cast further discredit on their country, by abandoning their post and flinging themselves into the snares of the enemy. It seemed to them that a bait had been laid to lure them to destruction. Macgregor knew that Akbar Khan had issued a proclamation to the chiefs of the surrounding country, calling upon them, as followers of the true faith, to rise and slay the Feringhees on the road; his voice was all for the retention of their post, and the military chiefs were of the same temper. Little time elapsed, therefore, before the following letter was written to Major Pottinger and General Elphinstone:

Jellalabad, January 9, 1842.

SIRS,

We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, which you therein state was to be delivered to us by Abdool Ghuffoor Khan, appointed Governor of this place by the existing powers at Caubul. That communication was not delivered to us by him, but by a messenger of his, and though dated 29th of December, 1841, has only this moment reached us. I have, at the same time, positive information that Mahomed Akbar Khan has sent a proclamation to all the chiefs in the neighbourhood, urging them to raise their followers for the purpose of intercepting and destroying the forces now at Jellalabad. Under these circumstances we have deemed it our duty to await a further communication from you, which we desire may point out the security which may be given for our safe march to Peshawur.

We have the honour to be, &c.,

R. SALE, Major-General.

G. H. MACGREGOR, Political Agent.

It is right that Macgregor and Sale should be suffered to state in their own words the motives which impelled them to adopt this worthy resolution. "The conduct," says Captain Macgregor, "of Major-General Sir R. Sale and myself, in having declined, under the circumstances, to deliver up Jellalabad to Abdool Ghuffoor Khan, Barukzye, in conformity with the instructions contained in the letter to my address of the 29th of December, signed by Major Pottinger and General Elphinstone, has already been approved by government; but perhaps it may be proper here to relate a few of the causes which led to such a resolution. When the British authorities at Caubul had decided upon capitulating, and the terms of capitulation were in the course of negotiation, my spies informed me that letters had been received from Mahomed Akbar Khan, and the Ghilzye chiefs, desiring the different tribes on the road to assemble to attack the British army, which was shortly to leave Caubul for

India. This information was confirmed by the letter from Burkutt Khan. . . . An intercepted letter from Mahomed Akbar Khan, which reached us at the same time, will serve to show the spirit with which he regarded us; therefore I felt convinced that treachery was intended by the Afghan chiefs, in which case our retaining possession of the fortress of Jellalabad became of incalculable advantage to the retreating force; and if it succeeded in reaching Jellalabad, strengthened as it would be by the garrison, we might yet have upheld our authority in Ningrahar, until an opportunity would have been afforded to the British Government to reinforce us, so as to commence operations for the recapture of Caubul. The troops left Caubul on the 6th of January; and not until the 9th did we receive the letter in question. Their fate had been sealed ere that period; and had the requisition been complied with, government would most undoubtedly have had to lament the destruction of the Jellalabad garrison as well as that of the Caubul force, the wishes of the enemy evidently being to inveigle us into their power, and then to do their worst towards us. Moreover, to have evacuated Jellalabad would have doubtless increased a hundred-fold the difficulties of re-establishing the British authority in this country, in the event of government determining so to do. Our national honour, and the safety of our Indian dominions, seemed to render this latter course of paramount necessity.”*

“As regards my own line of conduct,” writes General Sale, “in this difficult crisis, I am of opinion, in the absence of all instructions from India, that I am at liberty to choose between the alternatives of being bound or not by the convention, which was forced from our Envoy and military commander with the knives at their throats,

* *Captain Macgregor's Report: MS. Records.*

according as I may see either one course or the other to be most conducive to British interests. It does not absolutely impose any obligation on my force, which is no party to it; and under the consideration of its having been extorted by force, unless it should be ratified by the Governor-General in Council. If, therefore, I see a prospect of being reinforced from Peshawur within the period for which my provisions and ammunition will last, I propose to hold this place on the part of government, until I receive its orders to the contrary. If, however, any untoward incidents should preclude the prospect of Brigadier Wild's crossing the Khybur, I should esteem it wiser and better to retire upon Peshawur, with the debris of the force at Caubul, on its reaching me, than to remain here; but in no event would I retire unsupported by other troops to Peshawur, unless absolutely compelled to do so by the failure of food and ammunition. I feel assured that the rebels at Caubul dare not proceed to extremities with the force there, so long as they know me to be strong here; and that I should therefore be compromising them by evacuating this place, until they have been permitted to retire upon it."*

A season of painful anxiety and suspense followed the receipt of the letter from Pottinger and Elphinstone. But it was not without its alleviations. Money had become scarce at Jellalabad. The cupidity of the Afghans had seldom been proof against English money; and now to lack the means of appealing to it was to lose one of our principal means of defence. It was, therefore, with no common delight that the garrison now welcomed the arrival of a sum of money which Mackeson, ever strenuous in his activity, had sent on from Peshawur, through the agency of Tora-baz Khan, the loyal chief of Lalpoora.

* General Sale to Sir J. Nicholls, Jellalabad, January 11, 1842: MS. Records.

The defences of the place, too, were rising under Broadfoot's hands, and "by the middle of January, the commencement of the rainy season, a parapet, nowhere less than six feet high, with a banquette as wide as the nature of the rampart allowed, was completed entirely round the place. The gates were repaired and strengthened by buttresses. Two of them were retrenched, and a ditch carried round the north-west angle, whilst some of the most dangerous ravines were laid open to our force, and roads were opened into the low ground on the north side."* There was little, indeed, at this time, except a scarcity of ammunition, to render the garrison apprehensive on their own accounts; but every day made them more and more anxious concerning the fate of their countrymen, who by this time had left Caubul on their perilous retreat through the snowy passes. A letter from Captain Lawrence, dated on the 4th instant,† announced that the force was to march in a day or two with every expectation of being attacked

* *Captain Broadfoot's Report.*

† Caubul, January 4th, 1842.

MY DEAR MACGREGOR,

Pottinger being busy, I write to tell you of the Envoy being murdered, and Trevor, on the 23rd. We have been obliged to conclude the treaty, and it is settled we march to-morrow. Whether we are attacked on the road depends upon their good faith. I believe we do not run very much risk as far as Jugdulluck, except from the weather, which is very severe here; and we are obliged to march very lightly, and may expect to lose many men. Orders have been sent to you to evacuate Jellalabad before our arrival: if, however, the treaty is broken by our being attacked, you will consider the orders cancelled, and you will use every exertion to aid us. We have received your letter of the 24th, but our word cannot be broken. Pottinger wishes you, if possible, to

send intelligence of these matters to government and Rawlinson, that the latter may be aware of the state of affairs, and not do anything hurriedly. If you understand faith has been kept and are obliged to leave Jellalabad, you had better not pass the Khybur till we come, as it is feared our troops will be so disorganised as to require your aid through that pass. If you could take supplies for us to the mouth of the Khybur, it would be very desirable. We are all well. Lady M(acnaghten) ditto, though still much afflicted. Keep your scouts on the road, and give us as much intelligence as you can. You must chiefly depend on yourself for news of us, as all our Afghans have deserted us. We have no money in our treasury; so tell Mackeson to have some ready for us, if possible.

Yours, &c., &c.,

G. ST. P. LAWRENCE.

upon the road. Nothing could Sale's brigade do in this emergency, but patiently abide the result.

At last, on the 13th of January, when the garrison were busy on the works, toiling with axe and shovel, with their arms piled and their accoutrements laid out close at hand, a sentry, on the ramparts, looking out towards the Caubul road, saw a solitary white-faced horseman struggling on towards the fort. The word was passed; the tidings spread. Presently the ramparts were lined with officers, looking out, with throbbing hearts, through unsteady telescopes, or with straining eyes tracing the road. Slowly and painfully, as though horse and rider both were in an extremity of mortal weakness, the solitary mounted man came reeling, tottering on. They saw that he was an Englishman. On a wretched, weary pony, clinging, as one sick or wounded, to its neck, he sate or rather leant forward; and there were those who, as they watched his progress, thought that he could never reach, unaided, the walls of Jellalabad.

A shudder ran through the garrison. That solitary horseman looked like the messenger of death. Few doubted that he was the bearer of intelligence that would fill their souls with horror and dismay. Their worst forebodings seemed confirmed. There was the one man who was to tell the story of the massacre of a great army.* A party of cavalry were sent out to succour him. They brought him in wounded, exhausted, half-dead. The messenger was Dr. Brydon, and he now reported his belief that he was the sole survivor of an army of some sixteen thousand men.

* It is said that Colonel Dennie predicted that not a soul would escape except one man, and that he would come to tell that the rest were destroyed. "The voice of Dennie," says Mr. Gleig, "sounded like the response of an oracle when he exclaimed, 'Did I not say so—here comes the messenger.'"—[*Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan.*]

CHAPTER II.

[January, 1842.]

The Retreat from Caubul—Departure of the Army—Attack on the Rear-Guard—The First Day's March—Encampment at Begramee—The Passage of the Koord-Caubul Pass—Tezeen—Jugdulluck—Sufferings of the Force—Negotiations with Akbar Khan—Massacre at Gundanuck—Escape of Dr. Brydon.

THE story told by Dr. Brydon was one of which history has few parallels. A British army, consisting of more than four thousand fighting men and twelve thousand camp-followers, had, as he confusedly related, disappeared in a few days. Some had perished in the snow; others had been destroyed by the knives and the jezails of the enemy; and a few had been carried into captivity, perhaps to perish even more miserably than the unhappy comrades who had died in the deep passes of Koord-Caubul, Tezeen, and Jugdulluck.

In the struggle between life and death which then threatened to stifle the evidence of poor Brydon, he told but imperfectly what he knew; and but imperfectly did he know the whole dire history of that calamitous retreat. It was long before the garrison of Jellalabad had more than a dim perception of the events which ended in the annihilation of the Caubul force. No one man could speak of more than certain scenes of the great tragedy;

what had happened before, behind, around him, he could only conjecture. But there were other survivors than the solitary man who was brought, wounded and feeble, into Jellalabad on that January morning; and enough is now on record to enable the historian to group into one intelligible whole all the crowded circumstances of that lamentable retreat.

On the 6th of January, 1842, the army commanded by General Elphinstone, which, for sixty-five days, had been enduring such humiliation as never before had been borne by a British force, prepared to consummate the work of self-abasement by abandoning its position, and leaving the trophies of war in the hands of an insolent enemy. A breach had been cut, on the preceding day, by the Engineer Sturt, through the low ramparts of the cantonments, the earth of which bridged over the ditch; and now through this opening, and through the rear gate, the baggage filed out into the open plain, and the troops prepared to follow it. It was a clear, bright, frosty morning. The cold was intense. The snow was lying deep on the ground. Shelton had recommended that the baggage should be loaded by moon-rise; but it was not before eight o'clock that it was ready to move. About half-past nine the advanced-guard* moved out of cantonments. The English ladies and the children were with it; for it was supposed to be the place of safety, if safety could be found amidst the certain horrors of this perilous retreat.

* "The advanced-guard consisted of the 44th Queen's, 4th Irregular Horse, and Skinner's Horse, two horse-artillery six-pounder guns, sappers and miners' mountain-train, and the late Envoy's escort. The main body included the 5th and 37th Native Infantry; the latter in charge of treasure; Anderson's Horse, the

Shah's 6th Regiment, two horse-artillery six-pounder guns. The rear-guard was composed of the 54th Native Infantry, 5th Cavalry, and two six-pounder horse-artillery guns. The force consisted of about 4500 fighting men, and 12,000 followers."—[*Lady Sale's Journal*.]

It had been agreed that the chiefs should furnish a strong Afghan escort to protect our retiring troops from the furious zeal of the Ghazees, and the uncontrollable cupidity of those Afghan bandits who had all along looked upon the revolution only as an opportunity for much plunder. But the army commenced its march without an escort; and the Newab Zemaun Khan, whose good faith and true nobility of character are beyond suspicion, despatched a letter to Pottinger, warning him of the danger of leaving cantonments without any such provision for their safety.* But it was too late now to stand still. The Mission premises had already fallen into the hands of the enemy; and could not be regained without an engagement, which at such a time it would have been folly to risk. Pottinger instructed Conolly, who remained as one of our hostages with Zemaun Khan, to explain all this to the Newab. The good old man admitted the cogency of Pottinger's arguments, and promised to do his best to protect the retreating force. He fulfilled his promise to the utmost of his ability; but he lacked the power to restrain the people from perpetrating the outrages of which long impunity had habituated them to the commission, and made them regard themselves as the privileged instruments of chartered violence and rapine.

* "About eleven o'clock, when about half of the column had moved off, I received a letter from Newab Zemaun Khan, remonstrating against our march. But as the enemy had been enabled to seize the enclosures of the late Envoy's house and offices, owing to the early withdrawal of our guards, we could not consent without commencing an action for the recovery of part of our works. I represented this to the Newab, and begged Mr. Conolly to explain our situation. In consequence, about one P.M. I received another letter

from the Newab, agreeing to our movement, and promising that he would protect us as far as he could; and it is my duty to state that he did so to the utmost of his power; but the quantity of baggage delayed the march of the rear-guard, which was obliged to retreat with severe loss, abandoning two guns and much baggage, notwithstanding it did not reach the bivouac at Begramee till two the next morning." — [*Major Pottinger's Budeeabad Report: MS. Records.*]

The good intentions of the Newab are not to be denied; but the true policy of the British, on that January morning, was to wait for nothing, however advantageous in itself, but to push on with the utmost possible despatch.* But everything seemed to favour delay. The passage of the Caubul river was to be accomplished by means of a temporary bridge constructed of gun-waggons, though the river was fordable at many places, and might have been ridden or waded through without detriment to those who had been struggling through the deep snow. On this service, Sturt, active in spite of his wounds, was employed from an early hour; but it seems that the despatch of the gun-waggons was delayed, for some unexplained reason, and it was not until the hour of noon that the bridge was ready for the passage of the troops. Shelton had endeavoured to expedite the movement;† but had met with his usual success. He went to the General's quarters—found him at breakfast; and returned with nothing but a rebuke.

Had the whole of Elphinstone's army crossed the Caubul river before noon, and pushed on with all possible despatch to Koord-Caubul, it might have been

* "Before leaving Caubul, it was generally believed to be the General's intention to proceed, the first day to Koord-Caubul, and the second to Tezeen, which could easily have been accomplished, had proper arrangements for leaving cantonments been made beforehand, as the distance from Caubul to Tezeen is only thirty miles. Had this been effected, how different would have been the fate of the Caubul army. We should only have been one night and one day and a half in the snow, and should have escaped our enemy, who, the first day, were not ready to follow us."—[*Capt. Johnson's Journal.*]

† Brigadier Shelton says: "I knew nothing of the arrangements for the

retreat till they were published the evening before. The order was for the baggage to assemble at eight A.M. At that hour I went to Elphinstone's quarters, to beg he would let the carriages of the gun-waggons go out that were to form a foot-bridge for the infantry over the Caubul river, about 300 yards from cantonments, and got offended for my trouble. He was just sitting down to breakfast. They did not go out till between nine and ten, and having to be dragged through a canal caused further delay, so that the bridge was not completed for the advanced-guard to pass till past twelve."—[*Statement of Brigadier Shelton: MS.*]

saved. But the delays which arose on that dreadful morning sealed the fate of the unhappy force. The day was well-nigh lost. It was a day of suffering and confusion—presaging worse suffering and confusion to come. The advanced-guard under Brigadier Anquetil moved out with some order and steadiness—but in a little while the rush of camp-followers destroyed all semblance of military array. They mixed themselves up with the soldiers—a vast overwhelming assemblage of ten or twelve thousand men. Not a mile of the distance had been accomplished before it was seen how heavily this curse of camp-followers sate upon the doomed army. It was vain to attempt to manage this mighty mass of lawless and suffering humanity. On they went, struggling through the snow—making scant progress in their confusion and bewilderment—scarcely knowing whether they were escaping, or whether they were rushing on to death.

The main body under Brigadier Shelton, with its immense strings of baggage-laden cattle, was moving out of cantonments during the greater part of the day. The rear-guard manned the cantonment-walls, and looked down upon a scene of uproar and confusion beyond the imagination to conceive. The enemy, as the day advanced, began to be busy at their work of plunder. Dashing in among the baggage, they cut down the helpless camp-followers, and carried off whatever they could seize. The snow was soon plashed with blood. From the opening in the ramparts to the bridge across the river streamed one great tide of soldiers and camp-followers, camels and ponies; and at the bridge there was an enormous mass of struggling life, from which arose shouts, and yells, and oaths—an indescribable uproar of discordant sounds; the bellows of the camels, the curses of the camel-drivers, the lamentations of the

Hindustances, the shrieks of women, and the cries of children; and the savage yells of the Ghazees rising in barbarous triumph above them all.

So tedious was the exode of the force, such were the embarrassments that beset its progress, that when the shadows of evening began to descend upon this melancholy scene, the rear-guard was still on the walls. At six o'clock they marched out of cantonments, and, moved by one common thirst of plunder, the Afghans poured themselves upon the abandoned homes of the English, and, when they could not gratify their cupidity, began to gratify their revenge. The Feringhees had left little behind them. They had destroyed almost everything which they could not carry away, except the guns, which the General had deemed it expedient to leave in good condition for the use of his "new allies."* But at all events there were buildings standing there—buildings erected by the English for their own purposes—insolent monuments of the Feringhee invasion. The work of the incendiary commenced. The Mission-house, the General's quarters, and other public buildings, were soon in a blaze; and the British army, now scattered over the whole line of country between Caubul and Begramee, some already at the halting-ground and others only now starting on their dreary march, looked out through the frosty night at the great conflagration, which lit up the

* Eyre says that "the General had often been urged to destroy these guns rather than suffer them to fall into the enemy's hands; but he considered that it would be a breach of the treaty to do so." We cannot restrain a smile at Elphinstone's simplicity; but at the same time, the circumstance noted affords rather a pleasant indication of the General's honesty of purpose and singleness of

character. As an honourable English gentleman, having covenanted to give up his guns, he considered himself bound to deliver them over in the state in which they were at the time the covenant was made. The enemy do not seem to have appreciated Elphinstone's generosity, for they burnt the carriages of the guns as soon as our troops evacuated the cantonments.

incumbent sky like a stormy sunset, and for miles around reddened the great coverlid of snow.

Not until two hours after midnight did the rear-guard reach its encamping-ground, on the right bank of the river, near Begramee. They had been under arms since eight o'clock in the morning. They had been savagely attacked on leaving cantonments, and had left fifty of their numbers dead or dying in the snow, and two of their guns in the hands of the enemy.* They had now only accomplished five or six miles of their fearful journey; but they had seen enough to fill them with horrible forebodings of the fate that was in store for them. The road was strewn with dying wretches, smitten by the unendurable cold. The miserable people of Hindostan—the weaker women and young children—had already begun to lay themselves down to die in the dreadful snow. Even the Sepoys were sinking down on the line of march, and quietly awaiting death.

The night was one of suffering and horror. The snow lay deep on the ground. There was no order—no method in anything that was done. The different regiments encamped anywhere. Soldiers and camp-followers were huddled together in one inextricable mass of suffering humanity. Horses, camels, and baggage-ponies were mixed up confusedly with them. Nothing had been done to render more endurable the rigour of the northern winter.† The weary wretches lay down to sleep—some

* Lieut. Hardyman, of the 5th Cavalry, was here shot through the heart.

† A writer in the *Calcutta Review* says: "Major Pottinger told us that when the retreat was decided on, and no attention was paid to his, Lawrence's, and Conolly's advice to concentrate in the Balla Hissar, he urged the officers to have all the old horse-clothing, &c., cut into strips and

rolled round the soldier's feet and ankles after the Afghan fashion, as a better protection against snow than the mere hard leather shoes. This he repeatedly urged, but in vain, and within a few hours the frost did its work. Major Pottinger said that there was not an Afghan around them who had not his legs swathed in rags as soon as the snow began to fall."

never rose again; others awoke to find themselves crippled for life by the biting frost.

The morning dawned, and without any orders, without an attempt to restrain them, the camp-followers and baggage struggled on ahead, and many of the Sepoys went on with them. Discipline was fast disappearing. The regiments were dwindling down to the merest skeletons. It was no longer a retreating army; it was a rabble in chaotic flight. The enemy were pressing on our rear; seizing our baggage; capturing our guns;* cutting up all in their way. Our soldiers weary, feeble, and frost-bitten, could make no stand against the fierce charges of the Afghan horsemen. It seemed that the whole rear-guard would speedily be cut off. All thoughts of effectual resistance were at an end. There was nothing now to be hoped for but from the forbearance of the Afghan chiefs.

The Newab Zemaun Khan had ever been true to us—ever in the midst of the wild excitement of the Caubul outbreak, and in the flush of national triumph, he had been serene, generous, and forbearing; had borne himself as a worthy enemy; had been betrayed into no excesses; but had endeavoured to vindicate the rights of the Afghans without inflicting upon the Feringhees the misery and humiliation which others contemplated with irrepressible delight. He had exerted himself on the preceding day to control the fierce passions of his countrymen, and now he wrote to Major Pottinger, exhorting him to arrest the progress of the retreating army, and promising to send supplies of food and firewood, and to disperse the fanatic bands which were hovering so

* The mountain-train guns here fell into the enemy's hands, in spite of the gallantry of Lieutenant Green, who was in charge, and the artillerymen under his command. Green suc-

ceeded in spiking the guns, but being poorly supported by the infantry, he could not recapture them. Two horse-artillery guns were abandoned soon afterwards.

destructively on our flanks. Pottinger went to the General; and the General consented to the halt.* Shelton, on the other hand, was eager for an advance. He believed that their only chance of safety lay in a rapid forward movement, shaking off the baggage and camp-followers as they went. In this conviction, he hurried forward to Elphinstone, and implored him to proceed.† But the General was not to be moved; and the doomed army halted at Boot-Khak.

Here Akbar Khan appeared upon the scene. With a body of some 600 horsemen he rode up, and Pottinger saw him in the distance. Believing that he was a Sirdar of note, the political chief despatched Captain Skinner, with a flag of truce, to communicate with him. Skinner brought back a friendly message. The Sirdar, he said, had reproached the British authorities for their hasty movement on the preceding morning; but added that he had come out to protect them from the attacks of the Ghazees. His instructions were to demand other hostages, as security for the evacuation of Jellalabad; and to arrest the progress of the force, supplying it in the interval with everything it required, until such time

* "About mid-day I received a letter from Newab Zemaun Khan and Naib Ameen-oollah, requesting us to halt till they dispersed the fanatics, and promising us supplies of provisions and firewood if we did so. I communicated this to General Elphinstone, with the information that the defile in front was strongly occupied. The General having taken this into consideration, the utter confusion which prevailed, the exhausted state of the Sepoys, who had been under arms in deep snow from daylight of the 6th (with scarcely any rest, and neither food nor water at the bivouac), joined with the pressure on the rear-guard, he determined to halt till night and then pursue his march."—

[*Major Pottinger's Bulceabal Report: MS. Records.*]

† "I had just formed up a corps near Boot-Khak to resist a threatened attack, and was moving on again, when I heard the General had ordered a halt. I immediately hurried forward and entreated him to continue the march, having only come three miles, and assured him a halt on the snow, without tents or food, would destroy the troops; but he was immovable, talked of the Sirdars' promises, and sending a letter to Caubul to know why they had not sent us a safeguard. Here was another day entirely lost, and the enemy collecting in numbers."—[*Statement of Brigadier Shelton: MS. Records.*]

as intelligence of the retirement of Sale's force should be received. "It was too late to send a reply," wrote Pottinger, in his report of these proceedings, "and nothing was determined—but some persons persuaded the General to abandon his intention of marching by night." And so the doomed force, whilst the enemy were mustering to block up the passes in advance, spent another night of inactivity and suffering in the cruel snow.

It was at the entrance of the Koord-Caubul Pass that the force, now on the evening of the 7th of January having in two days accomplished a distance of only ten miles,* halted on some high ground. The confusion far exceeded that of the preceding night. The great *congeries* of men, women, and children, horses, ponies, and camels, there wallowing in the snow, no words can adequately describe. Many lay down only to find a winding-sheet in the snow. There was no shelter—no firewood—no food. The Sepoys burnt their caps and accoutrements to obtain a little temporary warmth. One officer† narrates how he and eleven others "crowded round the hot ashes of a pistol-case, and with some bottles of wine still remaining, tried to keep off the effect of the cold. They then all huddled together and lay down on the ground to sleep."

The sun rose upon many stiffened corpses; and a scene of still greater confusion than had marked the dawn of the preceding morning now heralded the march of the force. Doubt and uncertainty regarding the intentions of their chiefs brooded over the officers of the force; but few of the soldiers now remembered their chiefs, and the camp-followers were wholly regardless of their intentions. One paramount desire to escape death held possession of that wretched multitude; and a

* *Eyre's Narrative.*

† Lieutenant Melville.

crowd of soldiers and camp-followers, at an early hour, began to push on confusedly to the front. Whilst some efforts were being made to restrain them, Akbar Khan was in communication with the officers of the British Mission. Skinner again went out to meet the Sirdar. It was proposed that the army should either halt on their present ground at Boot-Khak, or make their way to Tezeen, there to await intelligence of the evacuation of Jellalabad. Four hostages were demanded as security for Sale's retreat; and Brigadier Shelton and Captain Lawrence were named as two of them. But Shelton had always resolutely refused to give himself up to the enemy, and Elphinstone was unwilling to order him. Pottinger, therefore, volunteered to take his place,* and Brigadier Anquetil consented, if a general officer were peremptorily demanded, to accompany the political chief.

Pottinger rode to the rear, where Akbar Khan sent a party of horsemen to conduct him to his presence. Welcoming the young English officer with a respectful kindness of manner, the Sirdar declared himself willing to receive three hostages—Major Pottinger, Captain Lawrence, and any other officer whom the former might select. Pottinger named Colin Mackenzie, than whom there was not in all the army a braver or a better soldier,† and those three officers placed themselves in the hands of Akbar Khan.

The force was now again in motion. It was agreed that they should push on to Tezeen, there to await

* "I volunteered to go in his place, thinking that such a mark of confidence would induce the chief not only to spare that officer (Shelton), but also Captain Lawrence (whose presence was requisite in charge of the Mission, as my wound rendered me incapable of exertion), and probably some other officers whose

services in the disorganised state of the force could scarcely be dispensed with."—[*Major Pottinger's Report: MS. Records.*]

† The Jezailchees whom he commanded had been by this time nearly annihilated, and "his services with them, therefore," said Pottinger, "could be of little further use."

certain tidings of the evacuation of Jellalabad. Between Boot-Khak and Tezeen lies the stupendous pass of Koord-Caubul. For a distance of five miles it runs between precipitous mountain-ranges, so narrow and so shut in on either side that the wintry sun rarely penetrates its gloomy recesses.* Into the jaws of this terrible defile the disorganised force now struggled in fearful confusion. In vain did Akbar Khan issue his orders; in vain did his principal adherents exert themselves to control the hordes of fanatic Ghilzyes, who poured upon our struggling rabble a deadly fire from their jezails.† Nothing could restrain the fierce impetuosity of our cruel assailants. Pent in between the incumbent walls of the narrow pass, now splashing through the mountain torrent, now floundering through the snow which filled the hollows, or was banked up beside the stream, the wretched fugitives fell an easy prey to the Ghilzye marksmen, who shot them down from the hill-sides. It was not a time to think of saving anything but human life. Baggage, ammunition, public and private property, were abandoned;‡ and the Sepoys

* "Down the centre," says Eyre, "dashed a mountain torrent, whose impetuous course the frost in vain attempted to arrest, though it succeeded in lining the edges with thick layers of ice, over which the snow lay consolidated in slippery masses, affording no very easy footing for our jaded animals. This stream we had to cross and recross eight-and-twenty times."

† Pottinger says, that "notwithstanding the repeated and urgent orders of Mahomed Akbar Khan, the fanatics attacked our column, whereon the chief left us in charge of his cousin, Abdool Ghyas Khan, and proceeded, to try if his presence would restrain the Afghans. After some time, we also moved on, and after a slow and tedious march amidst miserable scenes of cruelty and plunder, through

which our escort had considerable difficulty in preserving our lives, Abdool Ghyas Khan being obliged to call in Sooltan Ahmed Khan to aid him, we after dark reached Koord-Caubul, having on the way picked up a child of Captain Boyd's, &c. European women of her Majesty's 13th, and a private of her Majesty's 44th, whose lives had been saved by Mahomed Akbar Khan."—[*Major Pottinger's Report: MS. Records.*]

‡ "On leaving Caubul," says Captain Johnson, "each Sepoy had 40 rounds of ammunition in pouch, and about 60 camel loads per regiment, with 100 spare loads. We have not at present (January 8), for the whole force, three camel loads in box, and numbers of the Sepoys have not a single cartridge in pouch."

suffered their very firelocks to be taken out of their hands.

The massacre was fearful in this Koord-Caubul Pass. Three thousand men are said to have fallen under the fire of the enemy, or to have dropped down paralysed and exhausted, to be slaughtered by the Afghan knives.* And amidst these fearful scenes of carnage, through a shower of matchlock balls, rode English ladies on horseback, or in camel-panniers, sometimes vainly endeavouring to keep their children beneath their eyes, and losing them in the confusion and bewilderment of the desolating march.

That night the force again halted in the snow, now deepened by a heavy fall, which, as the army neared the high table-land of Koord-Caubul, had increased the bitterness of the march.† The night was, like its predecessors, one of intense suffering, spent by the perishing troops without shelter, without firewood, and without food. At early morn there was another rush of camp-followers and undisciplined Sepoys to the front; but the march of the troops, which had been ordered at ten o'clock, was countermanded by the General. Akbar Khan was then offering to supply the force with provisions, and to do his best for its future protection. At

* Many officers perished in the Koord-Caubul Pass. Among these was Captain Paton, the assistant adjutant-general, who had lost an arm in action at Caubul. Here, too, fell mortally wounded, Lieutenant Sturt of the engineers, a very fine young officer, who, though severely wounded at the commencement of the outbreak, stabbed in the face at the door of Shah Soojah's presence-chamber, had exerted himself with overflowing zeal and unfailing activity, whenever his services, as the only engineer at Caubul, were required; and whose voice, when others counselled unworthy concessions, had ever been lifted up in favour of the

noblest and the manliest course. He died on the 9th inst., attended by his wife and mother-in-law; the daughter and wife of Sir Robert Sale.

† Eyre says: "On the force reaching Koord-Caubul, snow began to fall and continued till morning."—[*Military Operations*, page 210.] General Elphinstone says: "Ere we reached the bivouac snow fell and continued during the night." Brigadier Shelton says, on the other hand, "On approaching Koord-Caubul it began to snow, but fortunately cleared up about dusk." Such discrepancies as these may well excuse the historian, if he be guilty of any slight errors of detail.

his suggestion a halt was ordered by Elphinstone; and the perishing troops sate down in the snow, which another march would have cleared, for a day of painful uncertainty. The whole force was against the delay. Shelton went to the General to remonstrate against it. In vain he urged that such a measure would cause the total destruction of the column. The General was not to be moved from his purpose.* The day was one of idleness and desertion. The Native troops, led by Shah Soojah's cavalry, began to bethink themselves of escaping from the horrors of the retreat by going over to the enemy. The General had paraded the ruins of the different regiments to repel an anticipated attack; and now Captain Grant, the adjutant-general, accompanied by the Tezeen chief, Khoda Bux Khan, rode to the head of these skeleton corps, now numbering scarcely more than a hundred men in each, and explained to them that Akbar Khan had declared his intention to kill all, who deserted to him, on the spot.† But the contagion was then fast spreading; and nothing could check the pro-

* "I went to E. and told him such a measure would cause the total destruction of the whole force; but he was not to be moved, replying that the Sirdar had sent to him to say, if he would stop there, that he (the Sirdar) would send him provisions, which, as I foretold, never came."—[*Statement of Brigadier Shelton: MS. Records.*]

† Captain Johnson says, in his Journal, "A message was sent to Mahomed Akbar regarding the desertion of our troops, and a hope expressed that he would not encourage it. He sent back one of his chiefs (the Tezeen chief, Khoda Bux Khan) to explain that any of our men deserting from us and going over to him would be shot. Our few troops had already been paraded to repel the supposed attack, which, however, did not take place. At the time of doing so, a Mission chuprassie was observed in the act of deserting. He

was immediately seized and as instantly shot." The same accurate writer thus describes the state of the force at this time:—"We have no means of carrying on the sick. All our dooley-bearers deserted the first day, or were murdered. The whole of our camels and yaboos have been either seized by the enemy or by our camp-followers; and even were they forthcoming, we have not men to look after them: the greatest confusion prevailed all day, and anxiety and suspense for our ultimate fate intense. Every man among us thought that ere many hours should pass he was doomed to die either by cold, hunger, or the swords of our enemies; for, if attacked, although we might for a short time hold out, nothing could eventually save us. . . . My eyes had become so inflamed from the reflection of the snow, that I was nearly blind, and the pain in-

gress of the disease. The Shah's 2nd Cavalry had gone over nearly to a man.

In the mean while Major Pottinger, who had passed the night in a neighbouring castle, was in consultation with Akbar Khan, and Captain Skinner was acting as the vehicle of communication between them and the head-quarters of the army. A new, and, at the first sound, startling proposition was now made by the Sirdar. He proposed that all the English ladies with the force should be placed under his charge, that he might convey them safely to Peshawur. Remembering that the families of the Sirdar himself were prisoners in the hands of the British, and believing that he was sincere in his desire to save the ladies and children from the destruction that awaited them on the line of march, Pottinger sanctioned the proposal; and Skinner was despatched to the head-quarters of the force to obtain the General's consent. "Desirous to remove the ladies and children, after the horrors they had already witnessed, from the further dangers of our camp, and hoping that, as from the very commencement of the negotiations the Sirdar had shown the greatest anxiety to have the married people as hostages, this mark of trust might elicit a corresponding feeling in him,"* Elphinstone complied with the request. A party of Afghan horse were in readiness to conduct them to the presence of the Sirdar; and so Lady Macnaghten, Lady Sale, and the other widows and wives of the Caubul force, became the "guests" of the son of Dost Mahomed Khan.

They did not go alone. The married men went with

tense. Several officers were more or less affected—one or two quite blind." The portion of Captain Johnson's Journal which relates to the retreat has been published in the *Asiatic Journal*. The preceding portion, relating to the outbreak, from which I have so largely quoted in

Book V., and that relating to the captivity, which I shall have occasion subsequently to quote, have never been made public. It should be added, however, that Lady Sale had access to these Journals, and has used them freely without acknowledgment.

* *Statement of General Elphinstone.*

them. The propriety of this step has been questioned. It has been even said that they were not demanded at all by Akbar Khan, but that they threw themselves spontaneously upon the mercy of the chief. It is right, therefore, that so grave a question should not be slurred over. There were three unprejudiced witnesses, whose statements, on such a point, would be worthy of acceptance, as the statements of honourable and unprejudiced men, familiar with all the circumstances of the case. Major Pottinger, Captain Skinner, and General Elphinstone knew all these circumstances, and had no reason to misrepresent them. Major Pottinger says that, "on Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan offering to take charge of the ladies and protect them to Peshawur, I considered it advisable to recommend that they should come over, as the Sirdar's family being in our hands was a sufficient guarantee for their good treatment, and it was evident that our own people were too diminished to protect them. Captain Skinner accordingly went over and mentioned the offer to General Elphinstone, who approved of it, and sent over the ladies, children, and married officers." Captain Skinner has left upon record no narrative of these proceedings. But General Elphinstone has distinctly stated that Captain Skinner was sent to him with a proposal "that the married people and their families should be made over to him, promising honourable treatment to the ladies." Whatever may have been the proposition, as it originally emanated from the Sirdar, there is no room to doubt that General Elphinstone shaped it into a recommendation that the husbands should accompany their wives, and that the former went over to Akbar Khan with the entire sanction of their military chief.*

* The party consisted of Lady and one child; Mrs. Trevor and seven Macnaghten, Lady Sale, Mrs. Sturt children; Captain Boyd, wife and

That the safety of the women and children was secured by their removal from General Elphinstone's disorganised camp to the custody of Akbar Khan, is now a fact which stands out distinctly in the broad light of historical truth. But writing now after the event, it becomes one to consider rather the wisdom of the experiment than the success of the result. I believe that Pottinger and Elphinstone judged wisely. There was a choice of evils, and it appears to me that they chose the least. The women and the children could not long have survived the horrors of that perilous march. They had hitherto escaped, almost by a miracle, the assaults of the cruel climate and the inexorable foe. They were insufficiently clad. They had no servants to attend upon them. They had scarcely tasted food since they left Caubul. They had no shelter during the frosty night-season. Some had just become, or were about soon to become, mothers; and yet they had been compelled to ride in jolting camel-panniers, or on the backs of stumbling baggage-ponies. It was plain that Akbar Khan had no power to restrain the tribes who were butchering our helpless people. The army was fast melting away. It was doubtful whether a man would reach Jellalabad in safety. To have left the women and children to pursue their march would have been to have left them to inevitable destruction. Akbar Khan might be a man of violent and ferocious temper, and no very scrupulous good faith; but because he had slain the Envoy in a gust of passion, it did not necessarily follow that he

child; Captain Anderson, wife and child; Lieutenant Waller, wife and child; Lieutenant Eyre, wife and child; Mr. Ryley, wife and child; Mrs. Mainwaring and child; Sergeant Wade and family. Captain Troup and Lieutenant Mein, being

wounded and unserviceable, went with them. Eyre says that it was the intention of the General that all the wounded officers should go; but that there was not time to make known his intentions.

would betray the widow of his victim and the other English ladies who were now to be entrusted to his safe keeping. Moreover, if no sentiments of honour and no feelings of compassion were within him, he might still be swayed by motives of self-interest; and it was not forgotten that his father, his brothers, and the ladies of his family were prisoners in the hands of the British Government, in the provinces of Hindostan.

The married officers and their families went over to the Sirdar; and on the following morning (the 10th of January) the remnant of the doomed force resumed its march towards Jellalabad. There was the same miserable confusion as on the preceding morning. Soldiers and camp-followers rushed promiscuously to the front. The Native regiments were fast melting into nothing. Throwing down their arms and crowding in among the mass of camp-followers, the Sepoys were rapidly swelling the disorganised rabble in front. Their hands were frost-bitten; they could not pull a trigger; they were paralysed, panic-struck; they rushed forward in aimless desperation, scarcely knowing what they did or where they went; whilst the Afghans, watching the cruel opportunity, came down, with their long knives, amidst their unresisting victims, and slaughtered them like sheep. "A narrow gorge between the precipitous spurs of two hills" was the appointed shambles. There the dead and the dying soon choked up the defile. There was not now a single Sepoy left. Every particle of baggage was gone. About fifty horse-artillerymen, with one howitzer-gun; some 250* men of the 44th; and 150 cavalry troopers, now constituted the entire force. Of the 16,000 men—soldiers and camp-followers—who had left Caubul, not more than a quarter survived.

* Eyre says "seventy files." I give the above number on Shelton's authority—they were men of his own corps, and he was with them.

Still hovering on the flanks of our retreating force, Akbar Khan, attended by a party of horsemen, watched the butchery that was going on below; and when Elphinstone sent Skinner to remonstrate with him, declared that he was powerless to restrain the savage impetuosity of the Ghilzyes, whom even their own immediate chiefs could not control. But he had a proposal to make. Those were not times when any very nice regard for the national honour prompted the rejection of even humiliating terms offered by our Afghan enemies; but when the Sirdar proposed that the remnant of the British army should lay down their arms, and place themselves entirely under his protection, Elphinstone at once refused his consent. The march was therefore resumed. The wreck of the British force made its desperate way down the steep descents of the Haft-Kotul, into a narrow defile, strewn with the ghastly remains of the camp-followers and soldiers, who had pushed on in advance of the column. As they passed down the defile, the enemy opened a destructive fire on their rear. The rear was then commanded by Shelton. With a handful of Europeans he repulsed their attacks, "though obliged to nurse their ammunition by a watchful check on its expenditure." "Nobly and heroically," says Shelton, in his rapid narrative of the march, "these fine fellows stood by me."* The gallantry of these few men was, for a time, the salvation of the whole.

After another attempt at negotiation, resulting only in the same demand for the disarming of the remnant of the force,† it was determined, at Shelton's suggestion, that a

* *MS. Records.* Eyre says: "Brigadier Shelton commanded the rear with a few Europeans; and but for his persevering energy and unflinching fortitude in repelling the assailants, it is probable the whole would have been sacrificed."

† "About a quarter of an hour after our arrival, the Sirdar and his party came into the valley, and proceeded to a fort higher up, belonging to Ghool Mahomed Khan. A signal was made for some of his horsemen to approach us. Two came; and

desperate effort should be made to reach Jugdulluck by a rapid night-march. Enfeebled by starvation, the troops were little able to struggle forward, on their perilous march, over a difficult country, and in the face of an active enemy. But despair had given them strength; and when the order was given, having spiked their last remaining gun, they moved off lightly and quietly in the hope of shaking off, under cover of the night, the curse of camp-followers, which had sate upon them with such destructive tenacity from the first. But no sooner had the soldiers begun to move, than the camp-followers started up to accompany them; and throughout that fearful night-march clustered around the few good fighting men and paralysed the movements of the force.

It was a bright, frosty night. The snow was lying only partially on the ground. For some miles they proceeded unmolested. But when, at Seh-Baba, the enemy again opened a fire upon their rear, the camp-followers rushed to the front; and when firing was heard ahead of the column, again fell back on the rear. Thus surging backwards and forwards—the ebb and flow of a great tide of people—these miserable camp-followers, in the wildness of their fear, overwhelmed the handful of soldiers who were still able and willing to show a front to the enemy, blocked up the road, and presented to the eyes of the Afghan marksmen a dark mass of humanity, which could not escape their fire even under cover of the night.

Soon after daybreak the advance reached Kutter-

Captain Skinner, by the General's desire, accompanied them to Mahomed Akbar, to devise some means of saving our now small party from destruction. All was the intensest anxiety till Skinner's return at dusk, when he brought back the same message as at Khubbur-i-Jubbar regarding the disarming of the Europeans.

Again this was not acceded to. The General decided, weak and famished as the troops were, and as there was no prospect of provisions being had at Tezeen, on again marching at seven P.M., and proceeding, if possible, through the Jugdulluck Pass, by eight or nine the next morning."—*[Captain Johnson's Journal.]*

Sung. They were still ten miles from Jugdulluck. Halting only till the rear-guard had come up, they pushed on with an energy, which at the commencement of the retreat might have saved the force from destruction. But it was now too late. The enemy were crowning the heights; there was no possibility of escape. Shelton, with a few brave men of the rear-guard, faced the overwhelming crowd of Afghans with a determined courage worthy of British soldiers; and fought his way to Jugdulluck. Almost every inch of ground was contested. Gallantly did this little band hold the enemy in check. Keeping the fierce crowd from closing in upon the column, but suffering terribly under the fire of their jezails, they made their way at last to the ground where the advance had halted, behind some ruined walls on a height by the road-side. Their comrades received them with a cheer. The cheer came from a party of officers, who had extended themselves in line on the height to show an imposing front to their assailants.* The enemy seemed to increase in number and in daring. They had followed the rear-guard to Jugdulluck, and they now took possession of the heights commanding the position of their victims.

The hot fire of the enemy's jezails drove the survivors of the Caubul army to seek safety behind the ruined walls, near which they had posted themselves. Withdrawn from the excitement of the actual conflict, these wretched men now began to suffer in all their unendurable extremes the agonies of hunger and thirst. They scooped up the snow in their hands and greedily devoured it. But it only increased their torments. There

* "As scarcely any Europeans of the advance now remained, and the enemy were increasing, the General called several of the officers (about twenty of us) to form line and show a front. We had scarcely done so, when my friend, Captain Grant, who was next to me, received a ball through his cheek, which broke his jaw. I lifted him off his horse, and seated him on the ground."—[*Capt. Johnson's Journal.*]

was a stream of pure water near at hand, but they could not approach it without being struck down by the fire of the enemy. Behind the walls they had a brief respite; and they tried to snatch a hasty meal. The ever active Commissariat officer, Johnson, found among the camp-followers three bullocks, which were instantly killed and served out to the famishing European soldiers, who devoured, with savage voracity, the raw and reeking flesh.*

The respite was but of brief duration. A party of horsemen was observed near at hand, and one of the number, having approached our people, said that the chief who commanded them was Akbar Khan. Skinner, who had acted throughout as the negotiator, now went to remonstrate with the Sirdar against the continued attacks of his countrymen. He had scarcely set out, when the firing was resumed. The men had lain down in the snow, to snatch a little brief repose after a long vigil of thirty hours; when the enemy poured in volley after volley upon their resting-place, and compelled them, in wild confusion—soldiers and camp-followers again huddled together—to quit the enclosure in which they had bivouacked. Individual acts of heroism were not wanting at this time to give something of dignity even to this melancholy retreat. A handful of the 44th Regiment here made a gallant rush at the enemy and cleared all

* "On the arrival of the rear-guard, which was followed up by the enemy, the latter took possession of the heights close to our position. For security we went within the ruined walls; our men almost maddened with hunger and thirst. Some snow was on the ground, which we greedily devoured; but instead of quenching it increased our thirst. A stream of clear pure water was running at the foot of and within 150 paces of our position; but no man could venture

down without a certainty of being massacred. For about half an hour we had a respite from the fire of the enemy, who were watching our proceedings. I was desired by the General to see if any bullocks or camels were procurable among the camp-followers. I luckily found three of the former, which were instantly killed, served out to the Europeans, and as instantly devoured, although raw and still reeking with blood."—*[Captain Johnson's Journal.]*

They had trampled down every feeling of mercy and compassion. Even avarice had ceased to be a moving principle; offers of money were disregarded, and they loudly declared that they wanted only the blood of the Feringhees. In vain Akbar Khan tried to dissuade them from their horrid purpose—in vain he urged that his father and his family were prisoners in the hands of the British Government; in vain the offer of large sums of money for a safe conduct to Jellalabad was made to these unrelenting chiefs. Johnson, who understood the language well, heard them conversing in Persian; and it was plain that they revelled in the thought of cutting the throats of the Feringhees even more than of growing rich on their plunder. They were not to be conciliated. Akbar Khan made an effort to pacify them, and they said in reply that they had recommended his father to kill Burnes, lest he should return and bring an army with him.*

of the British Government at Loodhianah, and that vengeance would be taken by the latter in the event of mercy not being shown to us. Mahomed Shah Khan offered them 60,000 rupees on condition of our not being molested. After some time they took their departure, to consult with their followers; and Mahomed Shah Khan mentioned to me that he feared the chiefs would not, without some great inducement, resist the temptation of plunder and murder that now offered itself, and wound up by asking if we would give them two lakhs of rupees on condition of being allowed a free passage. I mentioned this to General Elphinstone, obtained his consent, and made known the same to Mahomed Shah, who went away and promised to return quickly. The General again begged of the Sirdar to permit him to return to his troops; but without avail."—[*Captain Johnson's Journal.*]

* "Until twelve o'clock crowds of

Ghilzyes with their respective chiefs continued to pour in from the surrounding country to make their salaam to Mahomed Akbar; to participate in the plunder of our unfortunate people; and to revel in the delights of massacring the Europeans. From their expressions of hatred towards the whole race of us (whilst conversing in Persian, which they frequently did, until from a hint of the Sirdar they began to talk in Pushtoo, which I did not understand), they appeared to anticipate much more delight in cutting our throats than even in the expected booty. The Sirdar, to all appearance, but possibly only as a blind to his real feelings, whilst sitting with me endeavoured as much as possible to conciliate them. The reply in two instances was, 'When Burnes came into this country was not your father entreated by us to kill him; or he would go back to Hindostan, and on some future day return with an army

If there was any hope at this time it lay in an appeal to the cupidity of the chiefs, but their hatred seemed to overlay their avarice. Mahomed Shah Khan,* however, had undertaken to work upon their known love of money, and asked whether the British were prepared to pay two lakhs of rupees for safe conduct to Jellalabad. The General had assented to this, and Mahomed Shah Khan had undertaken the office of mediator; but it was long before he could bring about any satisfactory arrangement. At length, as the shades of evening were thickening around them, he brought intelligence to the effect that everything had been peaceably settled, and that the remnant of the British army would be allowed to proceed unmolested to Jellalabad.†

But scarcely had he announced this consoling intelligence, when the sound of firing was heard to issue from

and take our country from us. He would not listen to our advice, and what is the consequence? Let us, now that we have the opportunity, take advantage of it and kill these infidel dogs."—[*Captain Johnson's Journal.*]

* Mahomed Shah Khan was father-in-law of Akbar Khan.

† "I must not," says Captain Johnson, "omit to mention that Mahomed Akbar Khan told me in the morning, after Mahomed Shah Khan had gone to consult with the chiefs of the pass, that the latter were dogs, and no faith to be placed in them; and begged that I would send for three or four of my most intimate friends, that their lives might be saved in the event of treachery to the troops. My reply was that I would gladly do so, could my request be acceded to; but that the commanding-officer would never consent, and that the feelings of my friends would also be opposed to such a proceeding at a time of so imminent peril to their comrades. The Sirdar also proposed that in the event of the

Ghilzies not acceding to our terms, he would himself, with his party of horsemen, proceed at dusk to the foot of the hill, where our troops were bivouacked; and previous orders having been given by the commanding-officer that they should be held ready, he would bring away in safety every European, by desiring each of his horsemen to take up a man behind him; that the Ghilzies would not fire on the Europeans for fear of hitting him or his men: but that he could not allow a single Hindostanee to follow, as it was impossible for him to protect 2000 people (our computed number). I mentioned this to the General; but it was deemed impracticable, as, from past experience, we had seen how impossible it was to separate the non-combatants from the fighting men. Four or five times during the day we heard the report of musketry, which appeared in the direction of our troops, but were always told on making inquiry that all fighting had ceased."—[*Captain Johnson's Journal.*]

the direction in which the British troops were bivouacked. By the order of the General, Captain Johnson had written to Brigadier Anquetil, upon whom now as, senior officer, the command of the troops had devolved, directing him to have the troops in readiness to march at eight o'clock on the following morning. But the letter had not been despatched when the firing was heard, and it became evident that the British troops were again on the move.* It was about eight o'clock, on the evening of the 12th, that the few remaining men—now reduced to about a hundred and twenty of the 44th, and twenty-five artillerymen—prepared to resume their perilous march. The curse of camp-followers clung to them still. The teeming rabble again came huddling against the fighting men; and the Afghans, taking advantage of the confusion stole in, knife in hand, amongst them, destroying all the unarmed men in their way, and glutting themselves with plunder.

They did not, this time, escape. The soldiers turned and bayoneted the plunderers; and fought their way bravely on. But there was a terrible fate awaiting them as they advanced. The Jugdulluck Pass was before them. The road ascends between the steep walls of this dark precipitous defile, and our wretched men struggled onward, exposed to the fire of the enemy, till on nearing the summit they came suddenly upon a barricade, and

* "By the General's desire I wrote a note to Brigadier Anquetil, requesting him to have the troops in readiness to march at eight o'clock. I had commenced a letter to General Sale to evacuate Jellalabad (this was part of the terms). Suddenly, and before my note to the Brigadier had gone off, a great deal of musket firing was heard down the valley and in the direction of the troops; and a report was brought in that the Europeans were moving off through the pass, followed

by the Ghilzyes. We were all in consternation. At first the Sirdar suggested, and the General concurred in the same, that he and we should follow them. In two or three minutes, however, the former changed his mind; and said he feared our doing so would, instead of benefiting, greatly injure the party, by bringing after them the whole horde of Ghilzyes that were then assembled in the valley."—*[Captain Johnson's Journal.]*

were thrown back in surprise and dismay. The enemy had blocked up the mouth of the pass. Barriers, made of bushes and the branches of trees, opposed the progress of the column, and threw the whole into inextricable confusion. The camp-followers crowded upon the soldiers, who, in spite of the overwhelming superiority of the enemy, fought with a desperate valour worthy of a better fate. The Afghans had been lying in wait for the miserable remnant of the British army, and were now busy with their cruel knives and their unerring jezails. The massacre was something terrible to contemplate. Officers, soldiers, and camp-followers were stricken down at the foot of the barricade. A few, strong in the energy of desperation, managed to struggle through it. But from that time all hope was at an end. There had ceased to be a British army.

In this terrible Jugdulluck Pass many brave officers fell with their swords in their hands. Up to this time death had not been very busy among the commissioned ranks of our ill-fated army. The number of officers that survived, when the column left Jugdulluck, was large in proportion to the number of soldiers who remained to follow them. Though they had ever been in the midst of danger, and had been especially marked by the Afghan jezailchees, they had hitherto escaped with an impunity which had not been the lot of the common soldiers. This is to be attributed partly to external and partly to internal advantages. They had enjoyed no better covering and no better food than their comrades; but they had ridden good horses; and though, outwardly, means of keeping off the cruel cold had not been enjoyed by them less scantily than by the European soldiers, they had brought to their aid all the advantages of superior mental resources. They had been more cautious and more provident, and had been

greatly upheld by the knowledge of the responsibility which in such a fearful conjuncture devolved upon them. There is a sustaining power, under severe physical trial, in the sense of moral responsibility; the feeling that others are dependent upon one's exertions has a bracing and invigorating effect; and whatever excites mental activity is favorable to physical endurance. Many, in the course of that terrible retreat from Caubul, had perished under the influence of mental despondency; many had been destroyed by their own incaution. The officers had fallen only under the fire of the enemy. Thousands of the soldiers and camp-followers had been destroyed by the cruel cold.

But here, at this fearful Jugdulluck barrier, death struck at the officers of the wretched force. Twelve of the best and bravest here found their last resting-place.* Here fell Brigadier Anquetil, upon whom, after the departure of Elphinstone and Shelton, had devolved the command of the column. He had been the chief of Shah Soojah's force; was held in esteem as a good officer; but during almost the entire period of the siege had been incapacitated by sickness from taking a prominent part in the military operations which had ended in so much disaster and disgrace. Here, too, fell Major Thain, who had gone out to India as the friend and aide-de-camp of General Elphinstone, and in that capacity had followed his chief to Caubul; but throughout the time of their beleaguement, and all through the retreat, had been forward in the hour of active danger, and had gallantly served as a regimental officer whenever one was wanted to lead a charge. Here, too, fell

* Brigadier Anquetil; Col. Chambers, Captain Blair, Captain Bott, and Lieut. Bazett (5th Cavalry); Captain Nicholl (Horse Artillery); Major Thain, A.D.C.; Captain Dodgin; Quartermaster Halahan; Surgeon Harcourt (H.M.'s 44th); Lieutenant Steer (37th N.I.); Captain Marshall, Shah's force.

Colonel Chambers, who had commanded the cavalry at Caubul, and who now, with other officers of his regiment, perished in the attempt to clear the destroying barriers. And here, too, fell Captain Nicholl, of the Horse Artillery, who with his men, all through the dangers of the investment and the horrors of the retreat, had borne themselves as gallantly as the best of English soldiers in any place and at any time. Ever in the midst of danger, now charging on horse and now on foot, were those few resolute artillerymen. With mingled admiration and awe the enemy marked the desperate courage of the "red men," and shrunk from a close conflict with what seemed to be superhuman strength and endurance. There is not much in the events of the outbreak at Caubul and the retreat to Jellalabad to be looked back upon with national pride; but the monumental column, on which is inscribed the names of the brave men of Nicholl's troops, who then fell in action with the enemy, only displays the language of simple, unostentatious truth when it records that, on "occasions of unprecedented trial, officers and men upheld, in the most noble manner, the character of the regiment to which they belonged;" and years hence, when it has become a mere tradition that Dum-Dum was once the head-quarters station of that distinguished corps, the young artilleryman, standing in the shadow of the column, will read how Nicholl's troop, the oldest in the regiment, was annihilated in the fearful passes of Afghanistan, will dwell on the heroic conduct which preceded their fall, and glow with pride at the recollection that those brave men were a portion of the regiment which now bears his name on its rolls.

At this Jugdulluck barrier it may be said that the Caubul force ceased to be. A few officers and a few men cleared the barricade; and struggled on towards

Gundamuck. About daybreak they reached that place; and the sun rose upon a party of some twenty officers and forty-five European soldiers. The enemy were mustering around them. "Every hut had poured forth its inhabitants to murder and to plunder."* There were not more than two rounds of ammunition remaining in the pouches of our men. But they had not lost all heart. "Their numbers were as one to a hundred—most of them already wounded,"† but they were resolute not to lay down their arms whilst a spark of life remained. A messenger came from the chief of the district with overtures to the senior officer present. Major Griffiths, of the 37th Native Infantry, was then the chief of that little band; but whilst he was on his way to the Sirdar, the enemy mustering around them called upon them to give up their arms. The refusal of the brave men, followed by a violent attempt to disarm them, brought on a hand-to-hand contest. The infuriated mob overwhelmed the little party of Englishmen, and cut them up almost to a man. Captain Souter, of the 44th Regiment, who had wrapped the regimental colour round his waist, and a few privates, were taken prisoners. The rest were all massacred at Gundamuck.‡

A few, however, had pushed on from Soorkhab, which lies between Jugdulluck and Gundamuck, in advance of the column. One by one they fell by the way, until the number was reduced to six. Captain

* *Captain Johnson's Journal.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ The officers known to have perished at Gundamuck were Captain Grant, Assistant-Adjutant-General, who had been severely wounded at Jugdulluck; Lieutenant Stewart, Horse Artillery; Captain Hamilton, 5th Cavalry; Captain Collins, Lieutenants Hogg, Cumberland, and Swinton, and Assistant-Surgeon

Primrose, of H.M.'s 44th; Lieutenant Horsburgh and Dr. Metcalfe, of the 5th N.I.; Captain Reid and Lieutenant Hawtry, of the 37th N.I.; Lieutenants Weaver, Morrison, and Cunningham, of the 54th N.I.; Lieutenant Hobhouse, of H.M.'s 13th; Captain Hay, Lieutenant Green (Artillery); and Lieutenant Macartney, of the Shah's service.

Bellew, Collyer, and Hopkins, Lieutenant Bird, and Drs. Harpur and Brydon, reached Futtehabad alive. They were then only sixteen miles from Jellalabad. A prospect of salvation opened out before them all; but only one was suffered to escape. Some peasants in the vicinity of Futtehabad came out, spoke to the fugitives, and offered them bread to eat. They thought that a little food would strengthen them to toil on to the end of their painful journey; and the agonies of hunger were hard to endure. But again was there death in delay. Whilst our officers tarried for a few minutes to satisfy the cravings of nature, some of the armed inhabitants of the place sallied out and attacked them. Bellew and Bird were cut down. The others rode off; but were pursued and overtaken; and three of the remaining number were slain. Dr. Brydon alone escaped to Jellalabad. Wounded, and worn out by famine and fatigue, he had struggled onward, borne by a jaded pony, till the walls of the fort appeared in sight; and a party came out to succour him.

So perished the last remnant of a force which had left Caubul numbering 4,500 fighting men and 12,000 camp-followers. The frost and the snow had destroyed more than the jezails and the knives of the Afghans. It was not a human enemy alone with which those miserable men had to contend. It was theirs to war against a climate more perilous in its hostility than the inexorable foe. But neither the cruel cold nor the malignant Afghans would have consigned the British army to destruction, if the curse which had so long brooded over the councils of our military chiefs, and turned everything into folly and imbecility, had not followed them on their exode from the Caubul cantonments, and crowned the catalogue of disaster and disgrace. It is probable that, if greater energy had been exhibited at the commencement of the retreat—if

nothing had been thought of but the best means of accomplishing the march through the snow with the utmost possible rapidity—a large portion of the force would have been saved. But the delays which were suffered to arise at the commencement of the retreat sealed the fate of the army. They threw the game into the hands of the enemy. We waited, indeed, whilst the gates were being closed upon us, and then there was no outlet of escape. Whilst our wretched people were halting and perishing in the snow, the enemy were gathering in advance of them and lining the passes, intent on their destruction. The events of that miserable week in January afforded a fitting climax to the series of disasters which had darkened the two preceding months. There is nothing, indeed, more remarkable in the history of the world than the awful completeness—the sublime unity—of this Caubul tragedy.

It would be unprofitable to enter into an inquiry regarding all the minute details of misdirection and mismanagement, making up the great sum of human folly, which was the permitted means of our overthrow. In the pages of a heathen writer over such a story as this would be cast the shadow of a tremendous Nemesis. The Christian historian uses other words, but the same prevailing idea runs, like a great river, through his narrative; and the reader recognises the one great truth, that the wisdom of our statesmen is but foolishness, and the might of our armies is but weakness, when the curse of God is sitting heavily upon an unholy cause. “For the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite.”

CHAPTER III.

[1841—1842.]

Efforts at Retrieval—Close of Lord Auckland's Administration—Embarrassments of his Position—Opinions of Sir Jasper Nicolls—Efforts of Mr. George Clerk—Despatch of the First Brigade—Appointment of General Pollock—Despatch of the Second Brigade—Expected Arrival of Lord Ellenborough—Further Embarrassments.

At this time the Governor-General and his family were resident at Calcutta. The period of Lord Auckland's tenure of the vice-regal office was drawing to a close. He was awaiting the arrival of his successor. It had seemed to him, as the heavy periodical rains began slowly to give place to the cool weather of the early winter, that there was nothing to overshadow the closing scenes of his administration, and to vex his spirit with misgivings and regrets during the monotonous months of the homeward voyage. The three first weeks of October brought him only cheering intelligence from the countries beyond the Indus. The Envoy continued to report, with confidence, the increasing tranquillity of Afghanistan. The Douranee insurrection seemed to have been suppressed, and there was nothing stirring in the neighbourhood of Caubul to create anxiety and alarm.*

* On the 22nd of October, Lord Auckland wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls, that Macgregor's expedition had ended prosperously. "The Douranee insurrection," he added, "has also been completely put down without more fighting. Griffin's affair seems to have expelled their pugnacious propensities."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

But November set in gloomy and threatening. The clouds were gathering in the distance. It now seemed to Lord Auckland that his administration was doomed to close in storm and convulsion. Intelligence of the Ghilzye outbreak arrived. It was plain that the passes were sealed, for there were no tidings from Caubul. There might be rebellion and disaster at the capital; our communications were in the hands of the enemy; and all that was known at Calcutta was that Sale's brigade had been fighting its way downwards, and had lost many men and some officers in skirmishes with the Ghilzye tribes, which had seemingly been productive of no important results. There was something in all this very perplexing and embarrassing. Painful doubts and apprehensions began to disturb the mind of the Governor-General. It seemed to be the beginning of the end.

Never was authentic intelligence from Caubul looked for with so much eager anxiety as throughout the month of November. When tidings came at last—only too faithful in their details of disaster—they came in a dubious, unauthoritative shape, and, for a time, were received with incredulity. At the end of the third week of November, letters from Meerut, Kurnaul, and other stations in the upper provinces of Hindostan, announced that reports had crossed the frontier to the effect that there had been a general rising at Caubul, that the city had been fired, and that Sir Alexander Burnes had been killed. Letters to this effect reached the offices of the public journals, but no intelligence had been received at Government House, and a hope was expressed in official quarters that the stories in circulation were exaggerated native rumours. But, a day or two afterwards, the same stories were repeated in letters from Mr. George Clerk, the Governor-General's agent on the north-

western frontier, and from Captain Mackeson at Peshawur; and the intelligence came coupled with urgent requisitions for the despatch of reinforcements to Afghanistan. Though no authentic tidings had been received from Caubul, the advices from our political functionaries, on the intermediate line of country, were of a character not to be questioned; and Lord Auckland, who a day or two before had received letters from Sir William Macnaghten, assuring him that the disturbances were at an end, awoke to the startling truth that all Caubul was in a blaze, and the supremacy of the Sud-dozye Princes and their foreign supporters threatened by a general outburst of national indignation. Afghanistan—serene and prosperous Afghanistan—with its popular government and its grateful people, was in arms against its deliverers. Suddenly the tranquillity of that doomed country, boasted of in Caubul and credited in Calcutta, was found to be a great delusion. Across the whole length and breadth of the land the history of that gigantic lie was written in characters of blood. It was now too deplorably manifest that, although a British army had crossed the Indus and cantoned itself at Caubul and Candahar, the Afghans were Afghans still—still a nation of fierce Mahomedans, of hardy warriors, of independent mountaineers; still a people not to be dragooned into peace, or awed into submission, by a scattering of foreign bayonets and the pageantry of a puppet king.

The blow fell heavily upon Lord Auckland. An amiable gentleman and a well-intentioned statesman he had made for himself many friends; and, perhaps, there was not in all Calcutta at that time, even amongst the most strenuous opponents of the policy which had resulted in so much misery and disgrace, one who did not now grieve for the sufferings of him whose errors had been so

severely visited. Had it fallen at any other time it would not have been so acutely felt. But it came upon him at the close of his reign, when he could do nothing to restore the brilliancy of his tarnished reputation. He had expected to embark for England a happy man and a successful ruler. He had, as he thought, conquered and tranquillised Afghanistan. For the former exploit he had been created an earl; and the latter would have entitled him to the honour. It is true that he had drained the treasury of India; but he believed that he was about to hand over no embryo war to his successor, and that, therefore, the treasury would soon replenish itself. The prospect was sufficiently cheering; and he was eager to depart; but the old year wore to a close, and found Lord Auckland pacing, with a troubled countenance, the spacious apartments of Government House—found him the most luckless of rulers and the most miserable of men.

Never was statesman so cast down—never was statesman so perplexed and bewildered. The month of December was one of painful anxiety—of boding fear—of embarrassing uncertainty. There was no official information from Caubul. The private accounts received from Jellalabad and Peshawur, always brief, often vague and conflicting, excited the worst apprehensions without dispelling much of the public ignorance. In this conjuncture, government were helpless. The Caubul force, cut off from all support, could by no possibility be rescued. The utmost vigour and determination—the highest wisdom and sagacity—could avail nothing at such a time. The scales had fallen from the eyes of the Governor-General only to show him the utter hopelessness of the case. In this terrible emergency he seems to have perceived, for the first time, the madness of posting a detached force in a foreign country, hundreds of miles from our own frontier, cut off from all support by rugged

mountains and impenetrable defiles. Before a single brigade could be pushed on to the relief of the beleaguered force the whole army might be annihilated. Clearly Lord Auckland now beheld the inherent viciousness of the original policy of the war, and, in sorrow and humiliation, began to bethink himself of the propriety of abandoning it.

What Lord Auckland now wrote publicly on this subject is on record; what he wrote privately is known to a few. That the Governor-General, in this terrible conjuncture, succumbed to the blow which had fallen upon him—that his energies did not rise with the occasion, but that the feebleness of paralysis was conspicuous in all that he did, has often been asserted and never confidently denied. But it may be doubted whether his feelings or his conduct at this time have ever been fairly judged or clearly understood. The truth is, that he had originally committed himself to a course of policy which never had his cordial approbation, and his after-efforts to uphold which he inwardly regarded as so many attempts to make the worse appear the better reason. It is plain that very soon after the occupation of Caubul had for a time brought the Afghan campaign to a close, the Governor-General began to entertain very painful doubts and misgivings; and that, although he by no means anticipated the sudden and disastrous fall of the whole edifice he had raised, he had, long before the close of 1841, repented of his own infirmity of purpose, in giving way to the counsels of others; and began to doubt whether we had succeeded in the great object of the war—the establishment of such a friendly power in Afghanistan as would secure us against western aggression. He must have seen, too—for he was, in the main, a just and an honest man—that the policy, which he had sanctioned, cradled in injustice as

it was, was continually perpetuating injustice; and he must have heard the wrongs of the Afghan chiefs and the Afghan nation eternally crying out to him for redress. Macnaghten complained that Lord Auckland and Mr. Colvin were too ready to believe all the stories of the unpopularity of the government and discontent of the chiefs and the people, which reached them through obscure channels of information; though those channels of information were the local newspapers, whose informants were generally officers of rank and character. But in spite of the Envoy's assurances and denials, Lord Auckland had begun to suspect that there was something rotten at the core of our Afghan policy; and something pre-eminently defective in the administrative conduct of those to whom its working out had been entrusted. He did not, in the autumn of 1841, believe that any sudden and overwhelming storm would cloud the last days of his Indian government; but he had begun to encourage the belief that he had made a fatal mistake, and that, sooner or later, the real character of his Afghan policy would be revealed to the world.

But there was something more than his own doubts and misgivings to be considered. Lord Auckland knew that the connexion he had established in Afghanistan was distasteful in the extreme to the East India Company. He knew that the Court of Directors were desirous that he should avail himself of the earliest possible opportunity of severing that connexion for ever. On the 31st of December, 1840, the Court of Directors had written out to the Supreme Government: "We pronounce our decided opinion that for many years to come the restored monarchy will have need of a British force in order to maintain peace in its own territory, and prevent aggression from without. We must add, that to attempt to accomplish this by a small force, or by the mere influence

of British Residents, will, in our opinion, be most unwise and frivolous, and that we should prefer the entire abandonment of the country, and a frank confession of complete failure, to any such policy. Even financial considerations justify this view, inasmuch as a strong and adequate military establishment, costly as it must be, will hardly entail so much expense upon you as those repeated revolts and disorders which must arise in an ill-governed, half-subdued country; and which will compel you to make great and sudden efforts to maintain your character and recover predominance. To whatever quarter we direct our attention, we behold the restored monarchy menaced by dangers, which cannot possibly be encountered by the military means at the disposal of the minister at the court of Shah Soojah; and we again desire you seriously to consider which of the two alternatives (a speedy retreat from Afghanistan or a considerable increase of the military force in that country) you may feel it your duty to adopt. We are convinced that you have no middle course to pursue with safety or with honour.”* And six months afterwards the court again wrote (June 2, 1841): “The surrender of Dost Mahomed does not alter the views contained in our late letters; and we hope that advantage will be taken of it to settle affairs in Afghanistan according to those views.”†

Such, as Lord Auckland knew them to be, were the views of the East India Company. There was very good reason for all this. The necessity of sustaining Shah Soojah on the throne of Caubul had drained the financial resources of the Company to the dregs, and was entailing upon them liabilities which, if not speedily retrenched, they might have found it impossible to discharge. The injustice of the occupation of Afghanistan was not confined to the people of that country. A grievous injus-

* *MS. Records.*

† *Ibid.*

tice was being inflicted upon the people of Hindostan. No man knew this better, or deplored it more deeply, than Lord Auckland himself. The opinions of the East India Company had, at all events, been clearly expressed, and Lord Auckland, not taking into consideration the fact that peculiar circumstances might warrant, or even dictate, a departure from the general policy inculcated by the Court, deemed that the opportunity had now arrived for our withdrawal from the difficulties and embarrassments which had beset our unfortunate career in Afghanistan.

And when he turned his thoughts from Leadenhall-street to Downing-street, it appeared to him that there were still weightier reasons for the abandonment of our ill-omened connexion with the countries beyond the Indus. The Whigs had sent him to India; the Conservatives were now in office. At the end of August the Melbourne ministry had resigned; and Peel was now at the head of the cabinet. It was known that the Conservative party either were, or made a show of being, radically opposed to the Afghan policy of the government which they had displaced. It was natural, therefore, that Lord Auckland, who was now awaiting the arrival of his successor, should have shrunk from committing him to any extensive measures for the recovery of our position in Afghanistan, which, in all probability, he would not be disposed to carry out. Whatever amount of energy the old ruler might now throw into the work before him, it was certain that he would only be able to commence what he must leave to his successor to complete. To have handed over to the new Governor-General the outline of a political scheme, just sufficiently worked out in its details to render its abandonment impossible, would have been to embarrass and hamper him at the outset of his career in a manner that would

have perplexed the new ruler in the extreme, and jeopardised the interests of the empire. He believed that the policy of the Conservatives was nearly identical with that of the East India Company, and that they would eagerly take advantage of the present crisis to sever our connexion with the countries beyond the Indus, and to declare the failure of the original scheme propounded in the Simlah manifesto of 1838.

It is right that Lord Auckland should have ample credit for suffering these important considerations to exercise their due influence over his counsels. It is right, too, that it should be clearly recognised how great was the moral courage it demanded, either practically to declare by himself, or to leave to others to declare, the utter failure of a great political scheme for which he was responsible to his country, and with which, from generation to generation, his name will be indissolubly associated in the page of history. But when all this has been said, there still remains to be recorded the humiliating fact that a great crisis suddenly arose, and Lord Auckland was not equal to it. He had begun himself to doubt the justice and expediency of the policy of 1838. He knew that the East India Company were desirous that he should not persevere in a course which had brought them to the verge of bankruptcy, and was inflicting grievous injuries upon the people of Hindostan. He knew that the Tory government heartily disapproved of the occupation of Afghanistan, and had only been waiting for an opportunity to reverse the policy of the Whigs; and he believed, therefore, that it was his duty to direct all his efforts to the one object of withdrawing our beleaguered garrisons in safety to Hindostan. But he seems, in the bewilderment and perplexity which followed the stunning blow that had descended so suddenly upon him, to have forgotten that there are in the lives of nations, as of men, great and

imminent conjunctures, which not only sanction, but demand, a departure from ordinary rules of conduct and principles of statesmanship. Such a conjuncture had now arisen; and, important as were all the considerations recapitulated above, they should have given place in his mind to the one paramount desire of demonstrating to all the nations of the East the invincibility of British arms. Neither the wishes of the East India Company nor the opinions of the Conservative government had been declared in the face of a great disaster. The withdrawal of the British army from Afghanistan might, and I believe would, have been a measure of sound policy; but only if the time and manner of withdrawal had been well chosen. It could never have been sound policy to withdraw under the pressure of an overwhelming defeat. To retire from Afghanistan was one thing; to be driven out of it was another. A frank avowal of error, calmly and deliberately enunciated, under no pressure of immediate danger or insurmountable difficulty, would have denoted only conscious strength. It would have been the dignified self-negation of a powerful state daring to be just to others and true to itself. But to abandon the country, precipitately and confusedly, under the pressure of disaster and defeat, would have been a miserable confession of weakness that might have shaken to its very foundation the British Empire in the East.

And such a confession of weakness Lord Auckland was inclined to make. He seemed to reel and stagger under the blow—to be paralysed and enfeebled by the disasters that had overtaken him. His correspondence at this time betokened such painful prostration, that some to whom he wrote destroyed, in pity, all traces of these humiliating revelations. It was vaguely rumoured, too, how, in bitterness of spirit, he spent long hours pacing by day the spacious verandahs of Government House;

or, by night, cooling his fevered brow on the grass-plots in front of it, accompanied by some member of his household endeared to him by ties of blood. The curse brooded over him, as it was brooding over Elphinstone and Macnaghten, darkening his vision, clouding his judgment, prostrating his energies—turning everything to feebleness and folly. New tidings of disaster—misfortune treading on the heels of misfortune—came flooding in from beyond the Indus; and the chief ruler of the land, with a great army at his call, thought only of extrication and retreat—thought of bringing back, instead of pushing forward, our troops; of abandoning, instead of regaining, our position. Fascinated, as it were, by the great calamity, his eyes were rivetted on the little line of country between Caubul and Peshawur; and he did not see, in his eagerness to rescue small detachments from danger, and to escape the immediate recurrence of new disasters in Afghanistan, that the question now to be solved was one of far greater scope and significance—that it was not so much whether Afghanistan were to be occupied, as whether India were to be retained. But there were old and experienced politicians, well acquainted with the temper of the chiefs and the people of India and the countries beyond, who believed that any manifestation of weakness, in this conjuncture, would have endangered the security of our position in India; and that, therefore, cost what it might, a blow must be struck for the recovery of our military supremacy in the countries beyond the Indus.

But from the very first Lord Auckland began to despond, and steadfastly set his face against any measures of military re-establishment. When, on the 25th of November, he received from Mr. Clerk and Captain Mackeson intelligence which confirmed the newspaper accounts received two days before, and read the pressing requisitions of those officers for the despatch of more

troops to the frontier, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, who was then journeying through the Upper Provinces of India: "It is not clear to me how the march of a brigade can by possibility have any influence upon the events which it is supposed may be passing at Caubul. . . . They may be at Jellalabad in February, and could not march onwards to Caubul before April. . . . It may be well, perhaps, that two or three regiments should be assembled at Peshawur. . . . I wish the requisition had been made with less trepidation." Again, on the 1st of December, he wrote to the same officer: "It seems to me that we are not to think of marching fresh armies for the re-conquest of that which we are likely to lose. . . . The difficulty will not be one of fighting and gaining victories, but of supplies, of movements, and of carriage. . . . The troops in Afghanistan are sufficiently numerous. They would but be encumbered by greater numbers, and reinforcements could not arrive before the crisis will have passed. If the end is to be disastrous, they would but increase the extent of the disaster." On the following day he again wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls, setting forth the views of government, to the effect—"1st. That we should not fit out large armaments for re-conquest—such an enterprise would be beyond our means. 2nd. That even for succours the season is unfavourable and impracticable, and months must pass before it could be attempted. 3rdly. That if aid can be given, the officer in command should not be prohibited from seizing the opportunity of affording it. I fear," added the Governor-General in this letter, "that safety to the force at Caubul can only come from itself." On the 5th he wrote to the same correspondent, that "we should stand fast and gather strength at Peshawur"—on the Sutlej, and on the Indus. "Our power," he said, "of giving succour is extremely limited, and if it come at all, it can only come tardily. . . . We must look on an advance from

Jellalabad for some months as utterly out of the question. An advance even to Jellalabad could only be to give security to Sale, and with the aid of the Sikhs, one brigade, with artillery, should be sufficient. If all should be lost at Caubul we will not encounter new hazards for re-conquest."* On the 9th of December he wrote, still more emphatically: "The present state of affairs, whether its issue be fortunate or disastrous, is more likely to lead within a few months to the withdrawal of troops to our frontiers than to the employment of larger means beyond it." A week afterwards he wrote, still to the Commander-in-Chief: "We must know more before we can decide anything, or lay down any large scheme of measures. . . . There are already more regiments beyond the frontier than we can feed or easily pay. . . . You know I would not be too profuse in sending strength forward."† What Lord Auckland's intentions were at this time may be gathered from these letters. He thought only of saving all that could be saved; and of escaping out of Afghanistan with the least possible delay.

The Commander-in-Chief to whom these letters were addressed was, as has been said, at this time on his way through the Upper Provinces of India. Sir Jasper Nicolls had been consistently opposed to the entire scheme of Afghan invasion, and had with rare prescience and sagacity foretold the disastrous downfall of a policy based upon a foundation of such complicated error. He had spent his life in the camp; but his public minutes, as well as his private letters and journals, written throughout the years 1840-41, indicate a larger amount of political sagacity than we find displayed in the expressed

* About the same time Lord Auckland wrote to Sir W. Macnaghten: "I would have you share in the feeling which is growing strongly upon me that the maintenance of the position, which we have attempted to establish in Afghanistan, is no longer

to be looked to. It will be for you and for this government to consider in what manner all that belongs to India may be most immediately and most honourably withdrawn from the country."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† *MS. Correspondence.*

opinions of his official cotemporaries, to whom statesmanship was the profession and practice of their lives. He had all along protested against the withdrawal of our troops from their legitimate uses in the British Provinces, and urged that it was necessary either so to increase the Indian army as to enable the government to keep up an adequate force in Afghanistan without weakening the defences of Hindostan, or to withdraw the British troops altogether from the countries beyond the Indus. It was now his opinion—an opinion in which the Governor-General participated—that, inasmuch as the Indian army, largely indented upon as it was for service beyond the frontier, was greatly below the right athletic strength, it would be impossible to pour strong reinforcements into Afghanistan without weakening the British Provinces in such a manner as to provoke both external aggression and internal revolt. But supineness, in such a conjuncture, was more likely to have provoked aggression than activity, although the latter might have denuded India of some of its best troops. Macnaghten told Runjeet Singh, in the summer of 1838, that the military resources of the British-Indian Government were such that 200,000 soldiers might at any time be brought into the field to resist simultaneous aggression from all the four sides of India;* and although this may have been only an approximation to the sober truth, it is certain that, if the despatch of a couple of brigades to Jellalabad, and subsequently to Caubul, would have jeopardised the security of India, the military resources of the government must have been in a very depressed state. When Sir Jasper Nicolls, meeting the flood of intelligence from beyond the Indus, as he advanced through the Upper Provinces of India, recorded, in letters to the Governor-General, his belief that it would be unwise to prosecute another war in

* *Ante*, vol. I., page 314.

support of the Suddozye provinces,* he expressed only the sound opinion of a sagacious politician. But he seems to have forgotten that there was something more than the restoration of the Suddozye dynasty to be accomplished—there was the restoration of the military supremacy of Great Britain in Central Asia to be achieved; and whatever may have been the scruples of the statesman, in such a crisis as this, the soldier ought not to have hesitated for a moment.

But whilst such were the opinions of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, there were other functionaries nearer to the scene of action at the time, whose feelings prompted, and whose judgment dictated, a more energetic course of procedure. Among these were Mr. Robertson, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Mr. George Clerk, the Governor-General's Agent on the North-Western Frontier. Both of these able and experienced officers recognised the paramount necessity of pushing on troops to Peshawur with the utmost possible despatch. On the latter devolved, in the first instance, the responsibility of moving forward the regiments which were in readiness to proceed for the periodical relief of the troops in Afghanistan,†

* On the 27th of November he wrote to Lord Auckland from Myunpoorie: "If it be decided that we are to support Shah Soojah under all circumstances and difficulties, I must entreat your Lordship's early attention to the means of effecting this object, which may be a more arduous undertaking than the occupation of the country in 1839." And again, in the same letter: "There is a dark, perhaps a random hint, in one of these letters that the rebellion is instigated by the royal family at Caubul. If so, I would advise the early abandonment of them, their country, and their cause." On the 28th he again wrote: "I really would not advise our forcing either him or ourselves upon a nation so distant, and in all respects

so dissimilar both to our Sepoys and ourselves, at an expense so decidedly ruinous." And on the 30th, in still more emphatic language, he said: "My opinion regarding a renewal of our efforts to support Shah Soojah on his throne, and to establish a permanent influence in Afghanistan, is without change or modification. That we have no base of operations has been always clear; but now, were we to march a reinforcement on the best horses, we could not be sure of carrying the Khybur Pass, and if snow has fallen, the road to Caubul would still be closed."—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir J. Nicolls.*]

† The 53rd and 64th Native Infantry.

as well as a regiment which was in orders for Sindh.* On the 16th of November, he addressed letters to Colonel Wild, the commanding officer at Ferozepore, and Colonel Rich, who commanded at Loodhianah, urging them to send on to Peshawur, as speedily as possible, the regiments named in the margin.† In compliance with these requisitions, the 64th Regiment crossed the Sutlej on the 18th of November, and the 60th on the 20th of November. The 53rd, which was accompanied by the 30th Regiment,‡ crossed the river on the 26th.

Having expedited the movement of these regiments, Mr. Clerk began to make preparations for the despatch of another brigade to Peshawur, and addressed General Boyd, who at that time commanded the Sirhind division, on the subject. At the same time, he addressed urgent letters to the Court of Lahore, apprising them of the intended march of the regiments through the Punjaub—calling on them to supply boats for the passage of the river—and suggesting to the Maharajah that he should “cause the immediate march of his son, Koonwur Pertab Singh, on Peshawur, with 5000 of their best troops from the neighbouring district of Chuch Huzara.” Captain Mackeson had before applied to the Sikh authorities at Peshawur for 6000 men to march on Jellalabad; but had been told by General Avitabile that he had few troops at Peshawur, and

* The 60th Native Infantry.

† Two days before, Captain (now Sir Henry) Lawrence, Assistant to Mr. Clerk, whose later career has justified the high expectations which were formed of him during his connexion with the North-Western Agency, on his way out after a dacoity party, met the intelligence of the Caubul outbreak, and immediately after forwarding it on to Mr. Clerk went to Colonel Wild, to urge him to push on the 60th and 64th Regi-

ments, and to warn the Light Infantry Battalion and some details of the 10th Cavalry, for service beyond the frontier. — [*Capt. Lawrence to Mr. George Clerk: Nov. 14, 1841. MS. Records.*]

‡ Mr. Clerk sent forward the 30th, which was Wild's regiment, in order that the colonel might take command of the brigade, General Boyd having thrown out a hint that he was a more efficient officer than the colonels of the other regiments.

that he required them all for the protection of the Sikh territory.

Lord Auckland, however, was strongly of opinion that the second brigade, which was to comprise her Majesty's 9th Foot, the 10th Light (Native) Cavalry, and a troop of Horse Artillery, ought not to be moved forward. "We do not now," wrote the Governor-General in Council, on the 3rd of December, "desire to send a second brigade in advance, for we do not conceive it to be called for, for the objects of support and assistance which we contemplate; and we think it inexpedient to despatch any greater number of troops than be absolutely necessary from our own provinces." And two days afterwards he wrote privately to the Commander-in-Chief: "I heartily hope that the second brigade may not have been sent." He could not, he added, "see of what service it could be at present. One brigade, with the artillery which you purpose sending, should be sufficient to force the Khybur Pass; and ten brigades could not, at this season of the year, force the passes to Caubul."

But the "one brigade with artillery" never went to Peshawur. The Native Infantry crossed the Punjaub under the command of Brigadier Wild. Some artillerymen went with them;* but there were no artillery, for there were no guns. It was expected, however, that the Sikhs would supply the ordnance which the British had left out of the account. "You have not at present any guns," wrote the Head-Quarters' Staff to Brigadier Wild, "but you have artillerymen, sappers and miners, and officers of both corps. His Excellency is not aware of any difficulty likely to prevent your being accommodated by the Sikh Governor-General, Avitabile, with four or six pieces; and you will solicit such aid, when

* These artillerymen were on their way to Afghanistan to relieve the company then in the country, serving with Abbott's battery.

necessary, through Captain Mackeson." But when Brigadier Wild reached Peshawur, a day or two before the close of the year, he found that difficulties had arisen to prevent the preparation of the expected Sikh guns for service. The artillerymen were disinclined to hand them over to the British; and though great doubts were entertained as to whether they were in reality worth anything, it was hard to compass a loan of the suspected pieces. And so Brigadier Wild, urged as he was from all quarters to push on to Jellalabad, with the provisions, treasure, and ammunition he was to escort thither, sate down quietly at Peshawur, whilst Captains Mackeson and Lawrence were endeavouring to overcome the coyness of the Sikh artillerymen; and began to apprehend that his march would be delayed until some field-pieces were sent him from India.

His suspense, however, was of no very long duration. On the 3rd of January, four rickety guns were handed over to the British officers; but not without a show of resistance on the part of the Sikh artillerymen. On the following day one of the limbers went to pieces under trial; and then it had to be replaced. Other difficulties, too, met Wild at Peshawur. His camel men were playing the old game of desertion. The Afreedi Maliks had not yet been bribed into submission by Mackeson; and the loyalty of our Sikh allies was so doubtful, that they were just as likely, on Wild's brigade entering the Khybur, to attack him in rear as to keep the pass open for him. All these elements of delay were greatly to be lamented. There was a forward feeling among the Sepoys which might have been checked. They were eager to advance when they reached Peshawur; and their enthusiasm was little likely to be increased by days of inactivity in a sickly camp, exposed to the contaminating influences of the Sikh soldiery, who, always dreading the deep passes of the Khybur, now purposely exaggerated its

terrors, and endeavoured by other means to raise their fears, to excite their prejudices, and to shake their fidelity to the government which they served.

In the mean while active preparations for the despatch of further reinforcements to Peshawur were going on in the North-Western Provinces of India. Lord Auckland could not readily bring himself to recognise the expediency of sending forward a second brigade; but Mr. Clerk had taken the initiative, and the Governor-General was unwilling to disturb any arrangements which already were being brought into effect. The 9th Foot had been ordered to hold itself in readiness, and another regiment, the 26th Native Infantry, was to be sent with it, accompanied by some irregular horse, and a scanty supply of artillery.* The Commander-in-Chief was "not prepared" for this demand, and the Governor-General in Council thought it "undesirable" to send more troops in advance. But it was obvious to the authorities on the north-western frontier that the state of affairs in Afghanistan was becoming every day more critical; and that it was expedient to concentrate the utmost available strength on the frontier of Afghanistan. Towards the end of the year, the Governor-General having expressed a strong opinion regarding the necessity of attaching some regular horse to the brigade, the 10th Cavalry were ordered to proceed under Brigadier M'Caskill (of the 9th Foot), who, as senior officer, took command of the force; and on the 4th of January the brigade, consisting of 3034 fighting men, crossed the Sutlej on its way to Peshawur.

To command the body of troops now assembling for service beyond the frontier, it became necessary to select an officer of good military repute and unquestionable energy and activity, combined with a cool judgment

* Two nine-pounders and a howitzer.

and a sound discretion. Sir Jasper Nicolls had, in the month of November, when the despatch of a Queen's regiment to Peshawur was first contemplated, pointed to Sir Edmund Williams, as a general officer well fitted for such command.* But to the Governor-General it appeared expedient to place an experienced officer of the Company's service at the head of affairs, and Sir Edmund Williams was a general of the royal army, who had served but two years in India at the time of the Caubul outbreak, and who knew as little of the Sepoy army as he did of the politics of Afghanistan. Lord Auckland had made his election. In Major-General Lumley, the adjutant-general of the army, he thought that he saw all the qualifications which it behoved the commander of such an army to possess. But there was one thing that Lumley wanted; he wanted physical health and strength. When the Governor-General sent up the nomination to head-quarters, the Commander-in-Chief at once replied that Lumley could not take the command; and again Nicolls recommended the appointment of Sir Edmund Williams. Indeed, he had determined on sending for that officer to his camp, and arming him at once with instructions;† but

* On the 20th of November the Commander-in-Chief wrote to Lord Auckland: "I purpose that H.M.'s 9th should proceed with the second army. This corps is 900 and upwards strong, including sergeants and drummers. The Buffs are somewhat nearer, but they have been nineteen and a half years out of England, and should be moved towards Calcutta for early embarkation, especially as the 49th and 55th are so far out of reach. The Buffs have now nearly 200 men in hospital. The right to join, which the Court's order gives to Major-General Sir Edmund Williams, may be especially dispensed with by your Lordship, should you not choose to give him the command. Sir Edmund is in very good health,

a hale, strong man—moreover, was Lieutenant-Colonel of a Light Infantry battalion of Portuguese in the Peninsular war."—[*M.S. Correspondence.*]

† On the 15th of December, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote to Lord Auckland: "I very much regret that the state of Major-General Lumley's health entirely forbids the hope of his being able to undertake the command of the troops advancing to Peshawur. If, therefore, the force is raised to six regiments, I shall order the Major-General Sir Edmund Williams to join my camp by dawn, and push him forward, as soon as I shall have furnished him with instructions, and armed him with all the information and advice which the

subsequent letters from Calcutta made it only too plain that the appointment would be extremely distasteful to the Supreme Government; and so the intention was abandoned.* General Lumley was at head-quarters. The Commander-in-Chief sent for him to his tent, placed in his hand a letter his Excellency had just received from the Governor-General relative to Lumley's employment beyond the frontier, and called upon him for his final decision. The General was willing to cross the Indus; but, doubtful of his physical ability to undertake so onerous a duty, placed the decision of the question in the hands of his medical advisers, who at once declared that he was totally unequal to meet "the required exertion and exposure" demanded by such a campaign.†

known state of affairs at his departure may seem to require."—*[Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.]*

* In your Lordship's letter of the 8th, you have, I think, given a preference to General Nott, wherefore Sir E. Williams need not be disturbed. To send him to Cawnpore merely to force his way to Jellalabad and Caubul, and then return, giving over the command to a junior officer, would, I think, be unfair. As to his holding the chief command, it is a matter of no moment to me. The officer to command, if your Lordship could find such a man, should be also the Envoy—a Malcolm, Close, or Ochterlony."—*[Sir Jasper Nicolls to Lord Auckland: December 19, 1841. MS. Correspondence.]* "Twice I laid before the Governor-General the name of Major-General Sir Edmund Williams, and as a Light Infantry officer he was deemed most qualified to meet an enemy in a mountainous country; he was active, zealous, and in perfect health. In the command of a division he had shown a clear judgment, and given me satisfaction.

. . . The Governor-General gave such an unwilling and discouraging reply to my second communication, that I clearly saw the whole onus of the appointment and its consequences would be mine."—*[Sir J. Nicolls to Lord Fitzroy Somerset: September 2, 1842. MS. Correspondence.]*

† "In obedience to your Lordship's wishes, that Major-General Lumley should be placed in command of the force assembling at Peshawur, I requested his attendance at my tent, and placed the despatch now acknowledged (*Governor-General in Council to Sir J. Nicolls: December 15, 1841*) in his hands. The General is still very weak, though improved in health; he is willing to proceed, but requested that his medical adviser should be consulted as to his ability to undertake such a service. Assistant-Surgeon Turner decidedly assured me that his state of health would by no means admit of the required exertion and exposure."—*[Sir J. Nicolls to Government: December 24, 1841. Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.]*

The Commander-in-Chief then at once determined to nominate another Company's officer to the command of the troops proceeding to Peshawur. His choice fell upon General George Pollock, who then commanded the garrison of Agra.—Receiving his military education at the Woolwich Academy, he had entered the Indian army as a lieutenant of artillery in the year 1803—when Lake and Wellesley were in the field, and all India was watching, with eager expectancy, the movements of the grand armies which, by victory after victory, were breaking down the power of the Mah-rattas. At the storm and capture of Dieg, in 1803, young Pollock was present; and in 1805, during the gallant but unsuccessful attempts of the British army to carry Bhurtpore by assault, he was busy in the trenches. At the close of the same year he was selected by Lord Lake to command the artillery with the detachment under Colonel Ball, sent in pursuit of Holkar. From this time he held different regimental staff appointments up to the year 1817, when, in command of the artillery with General Wood's force, he took part in the stirring scenes of the Nepaul war. In 1818 he was appointed Brigade-Major; and subsequently, on the creation of that appointment, held the Assistant-Adjutant-Generalship of Artillery up to the year 1824, when, having attained the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, he volunteered to join the army which was assembling for the prosecution of the Burmese war, and was nominated by Sir Edward Paget to command the Bengal Artillery attached to the force under Sir Archibald Campbell, proceeding to Rangoon. For his services during the war he received the decoration of the Companionship of the Bath. From this time, except during an interval of some three years spent in England for the recovery of his health, he held

different regimental and brigade commands, until, at the close of 1841, being then Major-General, in command of the garrison of Agra, he was selected by Sir Jasper Nicolls to take command of the troops proceeding to Peshawur, and ordered at once to proceed to the frontier by dawk.

The appointment of General Pollock gave the greatest satisfaction to the Supreme Government, and not even a murmur of disapprobation arose from the general body of the army. The nomination of this old and distinguished Company's officer was believed to be free from the corruption of aristocratic influence and the taint of personal favouritism. It was believed, that in this case at least, the selection had been made solely on the ground of individual merit. And the merit which was thus rewarded was of the most modest and unostentatious character. There was not, perhaps, in the whole Indian army a man of more unassuming manners and a more retiring disposition: there was not one less likely to have sought notoriety for its own sake, or to have put himself forward in an effort to obtain it. Pollock's merits did not lie upon the surface. He was not what is called a "dashing officer;" he shrunk from anything like personal display, and never appealed to the vulgar weaknesses of an unreflecting community. But beneath a most unassuming exterior there lay a fund of good sense, of innate sagacity, of quiet firmness and collectedness. He was equable and temperate. He was thoroughly conscientious. If he was looked upon by the Indian Government as a *safe* man, it was not merely because he always exercised a calm and dispassionate judgment, but because he was actuated in all that he did by the purest motives, and sustained by the highest principles. He was essentially an honest man.

There was a directness of purpose about him which won the confidence of all with whom he was associated. They saw that his one paramount desire was a desire to do his duty to his country by consulting, in every way, the welfare and the honour of the troops under his command; and they knew that they would never be sacrificed, either on the one hand by the rash ambition, or on the other by the feebleness and indecision, of their leader. The force now to be despatched to the frontier of Afghanistan required the superintendence and control of an officer equally cool and firm—temperate and decided—and, perhaps, in the whole range of the Indian army, the government could not have found one in whom these qualities were more eminently combined than in the character of General Pollock.

Hastening to place himself at the head of his men, Pollock left Agra, and proceeded by dawk to the frontier. The second brigade was then making its way through the Punjaub, under General M'Caskill; and the authorities in the North-Western Provinces were exerting themselves to push on further reinforcements to Peshawur.

On the 22nd of January, the Commander-in-Chief and Mr. George Clerk met at Thanesur, some two marches distant from Kurnaul. They had received the melancholy tidings of the destruction of the Caubul force; and they took counsel together regarding the measures to be pursued in consequence of this gigantic calamity. Very different were the views of these two functionaries. To Sir Jasper Nicolls it appeared that the destruction of the Caubul force afforded no reason for the advance of further reinforcements; but rather seemed to indicate the expediency of a retrograde movement on the part of all the remaining troops beyond the Indus. It was his

opinion—an opinion to some extent shared by the Supreme Government—that the retention of Jellalabad being no longer necessary, to support the Caubul army, or to assist its retreat, the withdrawal of the garrison to Peshawur had become primarily expedient; and that, as the re-conquest and re-occupation of Afghanistan were not under any circumstances to be recommended, it was desirable that, after the safety of Sale's brigade had been secured, the whole force should return to Hindostan. But Mr. Clerk was all for a forward movement. He argued that the safety and the honour of the British nation demanded that we should hold our own at Jellalabad, until the garrison, reinforced by fresh troops from the provinces of India, could march upon Caubul, in conjunction with the Candahar force moving from the westward, chastise the enemy on the theatre of their recent successes, and then withdraw altogether from Afghanistan “with dignity and undiminished honour.”* It was gall and wormwood to George Clerk to think for a moment of leaving the Afghans, flushed with success, to revel in the humiliation of the British Government, and to boast of the destruction of a British army. Emphatically he dwelt on the disgrace of inactivity in such a crisis; and emphatically he dwelt upon the danger. Coolly and quietly, as one whose ordinary serenity was not to be disturbed by any accidental convulsions, Sir Jasper Nicolls set forth in reply that the return of so many regiments to the provinces, and the vast reduction of expenditure that would attend it, would place the government in such a position of strength as would enable it summarily to chastise any neighbouring state that might presume upon our recent misfortunes to show a hostile front against us. The demand for more troops he would have resisted altogether; but the urgency of George Clerk was

* *Sir Jasper Nicolls to Government: January 24th, 1842.*

not to be withstood, and two more regiments—the 6th and 55th Native Infantry—were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Peshawur. But when Clerk asked for a detachment of British dragoons, Nicolls peremptorily resisted the demand, and referred the question to the Supreme Government.* Before the reference reached Calcutta, Lord Auckland had received intelligence of the massacre of Elphinstone's army; and he wrote back to the Commander-in-Chief that it was essentially necessary that a commanding force should assemble at Peshawur—that it was particularly important that the force should be effective in cavalry and artillery, and that at all events two squadrons of European dragoons should be pushed on to Peshawur.† The 1st

* "We have had a long conversation upon the affairs of Afghanistan, including the statement of Assistant-Surgeon Brydon; and Mr. Clerk has, by various and repeated arguments, endeavoured to convince me of the necessity of detaching another reinforcement to Peshawur, in order to support Jellalabad. My instructions and my opinion (expressed in my letter of yesterday) being widely different, I have demurred giving my consent to the proposal; but as your Lordship was not aware, on the date of your last orders of the 6th of January, of the murder of Sir Wm. Macnaghten, and probable fate of our troops, I have ordered the 6th and 55th Regiments of Native Infantry from Kurnal to Ferozepore, which will enable me to detach two corps to Peshawur, should not your Lordship in Council's views and orders have been altered or modified by that event, and your resolution be made known to me. Being fully aware of the confidence enjoyed by Mr. Clerk, I have taken this preparatory step; but when he advised the addition of some portion of her Majesty's 3rd Dragoons, I felt myself unable to give him any hope of such a requisition being attended

to."—[*Sir Jasper Nicolls to Government: January 23rd.*] "*Thanesur*, January 23rd.—Mr. C. joined us on the ground. He is anxiously in favour of our sending forward more troops, in view, I believe, to our undertaking the re-conquest of Caubul. To this I decidedly object. We have neither funds nor men available, without in the latter instance leaving India so bare as to risk its safety."—[*Private Journal of Sir Jasper Nicolls. MS. Records.*]

† "We regard it as absolutely essential to the maintenance of our interests at this crisis that a commanding force of all arms should be concentrated at or near Peshawur, in order to curb the violence of excitement which may be expected in that quarter, and to protect the Sikh territory from aggression. It is particularly important that this force should be effective in cavalry and light artillery, and we are disposed strongly to adhere to our recommendation that two squadrons of European dragoons should be employed on the service."—[*Governor-General in Council to Sir Jasper Nicolls: February 2nd, 1842.*]

Regiment of Native Cavalry and a troop of Horse-Artillery were subsequently added to the third brigade.

In the mean while increasing care and anxiety were brooding over Government House. Gloomily the new year dawned upon its inmates. And there was not in that great palaced city, or in any one of the smaller stations and cantonments of India, an Englishman whose heart did not beat, and whose hand did not tremble with anxiety for the fate of the Caubul force, when he opened the letters or papers which brought him intelligence from beyond the frontier. No one, who dwelt in any part of India during the early months of 1842, will ever forget the anxious faces and thick voices with which tidings were sought; questions and opinions interchanged; hopes and fears expressed; rumours sifted; probabilities weighed; and how, as the tragedy deepened in solemn interest, even the most timid and desponding felt that the ascertained reality far exceeded in misery and horror all that their excited imaginations had darkly foretold. There was a weight in the social atmosphere, as of dense superincumbent thunder-clouds. The festivities of the cold season were arrested; gaiety and hospitality were not. There were few families in the country which did not sicken with apprehension for the fate of some beloved relative or friend, whilst unconnected men, in whom the national overlaid the personal feeling, in this conjuncture, sighed over the tarnished reputation of their country, and burned to avenge the insults that had been heaped upon it.

It would be pleasant to record that, in this great and melancholy crisis, the public looked up with confidence and assurance to the statesman upon whom was now thrown the responsibility of extricating from the quickset of danger and difficulty that environed them, the imperilled affairs of the British Indian Empire.

But history can give currency to no such fiction. As time advanced it became more and more painfully evident that Lord Auckland was reeling and staggering beneath the blow that had descended upon him. He appeared to be unable to decide upon any consistent plan of action. At one time he seems to have contemplated the withdrawal of the Jellalabad garrison to Peshawur, leaving it to fight its own way through the pass; at another, he seems to have been fully impressed with the necessity of retaining the former post, if only for the protection of the Caubul force; then he talked of concentrating a large army at Peshawur, and almost immediately afterwards began to think that it would be more expedient to have our advanced post at Ferozepore. There was only one point on which he seems clearly to have made up his mind. He was resolute not to recommend a forward movement for the re-occupation of Caubul. He believed that any such attempt would be attended with disaster and disgrace; and he considered that it became him, on the eve of departure, as he was, not to embarrass his successor by inextricably pledging the government to measures which the new Viceroy might consider "rash, impolitic, and ruinous."^{*}

* Lord Auckland's private letters to the Commander-in-Chief exhibit better than anything else the alternations in the Governor-General's opinions. On the 3rd of January he wrote: "It is melancholy to think how mighty interests may be compromised by such errors as seem to have been committed. Our officers are very wild in their requisitions. We have given all that we can prudently give—perhaps even more; and the chance of operations must be measured by those means."—On the 5th of January, after describing the tidings from Caubul as "in-

explicable as they are appalling," and declaring that he "was prepared for everything but for such misdirection and misconduct as seem to have taken place," he proceeded to say, "I can make no further suggestions to you until I know more; but you may shortly have to consider what instructions should be given to General Sale, and as to whether it may not be better that he should fight down, than that Brigadier Wild or General Pollock should fight up, the pass. This must greatly depend on the manner in which matters may end at Caubul."—On the

On the 30th of January the worst fears of government were confirmed. An express arrived from Mr.

21st of the same month, he wrote, that he "still adhered to his opinion, that it would be madness with such force and means of carriage, as we could easily collect, to attempt a fresh advance upon Caubul; and that such a movement would only have been justified, if we had been led to it by objects of rescue. It would be my wish, if it could be done with safety, that Jellalabad should be retained for some weeks, and until the fate of the British troops in other parts of Afghanistan should be ascertained."—On the 26th he wrote: "I agree with you that, at least so long as the fate of the force at Caubul is uncertain, the post at Jellalabad must be maintained. I think it will be absolutely necessary, under any circumstances, to maintain for a time a strong force in Peshawur—also at Quettah and Sukkur. If our retirement carry with it a general appearance of defeat and of flight, it will bring on Peshawur and the Punjab—on Beloochistan and Sindh—a tide of aggression and disaster which it may be difficult to stem, and against the chance of which we must endeavour to guard."—On the 28th, growing still more convinced of the expediency of doing something for the recovery of our lost honour, he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, speaking first with reference to the refusal of Sale and Macgregor to evacuate Jellalabad: "We approve of the determination taken at Jellalabad not to withdraw the troops as directed. Far from withdrawal under such circumstances, I am anxious to learn that Brigadier Wild has found it safe to advance to Jellalabad. . . . Whatever happens beyond the passes, we should be strong for a time in Peshawur. . . . For the present, at least, Jellalabad should be firmly held;—General Elphinstone was not in a condition to make stipulations, except for his own troops at Caubul."—On the 3rd of February he expressed

his opinion that Jellalabad should be held so long as there was a chance of assisting the escape of fugitives: "I apprehend," he added, "that its evacuation will, in a very short time, become absolutely necessary; if so, the movement should not be long delayed." He expressed a doubt, too, whether, with the "force that we can employ, the pass (Khybur) can be so occupied as to secure through it a safe passage of detachments and convoys. A descent through the Jugdulluck Passes to Caubul is beyond our present power. It would require vast exertions and months of preparation, and in the end would be an enterprise of no light danger. I almost conceive that it would be an impossible enterprise with any means that we could bring to bear upon it, unless some party should separate from the present combination, and then with what confidence should we render it? I have therefore, in dissent from many for whom I have the highest respect, earnestly wished that the force at Jellalabad could be safely and creditably withdrawn to Peshawur. . . . I would not have it hastily retire beyond Peshawur, or any healthy spot near it. . . . The post should be as forward as it safely can be; and my successor could then pursue the line of policy which he may think best. I would not have the government inextricably pledged to measures which my successor may regard as rash, impolitic, and ruinous." But he soon came to modify these opinions in favour of a forward position; and later on the same day wrote that the disaffection of the Sikhs might cause him to alter his views with regard to Peshawur: "I am coming fast to the opinion," he said, "that our furthest point of support in advance must be Ferozepore, and that we must bear the disgrace and disadvantage of retiring to this frontier with as little of loss as may now be ensured."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

Clerk, setting forth, on the authority of letters received from Macgregor at Jellalabad, that the Caubul force had been utterly destroyed. Some vague rumours of this crowning disaster had obtained currency in Calcutta a day or two before; and now the terrible apprehensions of the public were found to have been only the presages of actual truth. The immediate effect of this astounding intelligence upon the conduct of government was to rouse the Governor-General into something like a temporary demonstration of vigour. He issued a proclamation declaring that he considered the calamity that had overtaken the British arms only "as a new occasion for displaying the stability and vigour of the British power, and the admirable spirit and valour of the British-Indian army."* But it was little more than a spasm of energy. The ink with which this notification was written was hardly dry before the Governor-General in

* "Fort William, Jan. 31, 1842.

"Intelligence having been received which leaves no room to doubt that, after the British force at Caubul had maintained its position against overpowering numbers of insurgents for more than six weeks, the officer commanding had judged it necessary, in consequence of a failure of provisions, to agree to a convention of the enemy, and to retire, in reliance on the faith of that convention, towards Jellalabad, when the troops, exposed to the worst rigours of cold and privation, in the mountain defiles, and harassed by treacherous attacks, suffered extreme disasters—the Governor-General in Council deems it proper to notify that the most active measures have been adopted, and will be steadfastly persecuted, for expediting powerful reinforcements to the Afghan frontier, and for assisting such operations as may be required in that quarter, for the maintenance of the honour and interests of the British Government.

"The ample military means at the disposal of the British Government will be strenuously applied to these objects, so as at once to support external operations, and to cause efficient protection for its subjects and allies.

"A faithless enemy, stained by the foul crime of assassination, has, through a failure of supplies followed by consummate treachery, been able to overcome a body of British troops, in a country removed, by distance and difficulties of season, from the possibility of succour. But the Governor-General in Council, while he most deeply laments the loss of the brave officers and men, regards this partial reverse only as a new occasion for displaying the stability and vigour of the British power, and the admirable spirit and valour of the British-Indian army.

"By order of the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council.

"T. H. MADDOCK."

Council wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, that Jellalabad was not a place which he desired to be kept at all hazards, and after succour should have been given to Sir R. Sale's brigade then, and relief should have been given to parties arriving from Caubul, the Governor-General in Council would wish General Pollock, rather than run extreme risks in that position, to arrange for the withdrawal of it, and the assembling of his force at or near Peshawur.*

As time advanced, the retrograde tendencies of Lord Auckland's determination became more and more apparent. On the 10th of February, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, instructing him to inform General Pollock that, "as the main inducement for the maintenance of a post at Jellalabad—namely, that of being a point of support to any of our troops escaping from Caubul—having now unhappily passed away, it is the object of the government that he should, unless any unforeseen contingency should give a decidedly favorable turn to affairs, confine himself to measures for withdrawing the Jellalabad garrison in safety to Peshawur, and there for the present, holding together all the troops under his orders in a secure position, removed from collision with the Sikh forces or subjects." And on the same day, Mr. Maddock, the chief secretary, under instructions from the Supreme Government, wrote to Mr. Clerk that "it would be highly desirable that when Jellalabad was no longer held by us, our detachments, which have been moved forward in support to meet a present emergency, should be brought gradually back to their cantonments, in order that any ulterior operations that may be determined upon for another advance beyond the Indus (and

* *Supreme Government to Sir Jasper Nicolls: January 31, 1842.*—[Published Papers.]

that towards the Khybur and Jellalabad is probably not the one to which preference would be given) may be undertaken after full preparation, with a complete equipment, and in fresh and well-organised strength.”*

Lord Auckland had been startled by the astounding intelligence of the massacre of Elphinstone's army into an ebullition of energy by no means in accordance with the previous tenor of the measures which he had initiated, and not more in accordance with those which were about to emanate from him. After the first paroxysm of horror and indignation was over, he began again to settle down quietly in the conviction that it was best to do as little as possible on the other side of the Indus, lest worse misfortunes should descend upon us, and the attempt to recover our lost reputation should result only in further disgrace.

By this time the doubts of those who had speculated on the subject of the succession to the Governor-Generalship had been set at rest by the arrival of the Overland Mail. The despatches received in December announced that the choice of the home ministry had fallen upon one of their own body; and that the East India Company had ratified the choice. Lord Ellenborough, who had before filled and was now filling the office of President of the Board of Control, had been appointed Viceroy of India. The question of the succession had been canvassed with more than common eagerness, and its solution looked forward to with unusual interest. When the intelligence at last arrived it took the majority by

* *Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.* Lord Auckland's private letters were still more decided on these points. "I should be glad," he wrote to Sir Jasper Nicolls on the 10th of February, "to hear that Sir R. Sale has been able to withdraw his brigade from a

position so perilous as to make me regard its possible fate with extreme anxiety." Two days afterwards he wrote to the same correspondent: "I have from the beginning believed a second conquest of Caubul with our present means to be absolutely impossible."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

surprise. The probability of the appointment of Lord Ellenborough had not been entertained. Sir James Graham, Lord Heytesbury, Lord Lichfield—nay, even Lord Lyndhurst, had been named; but speculation had not busied itself with the name of Lord Ellenborough.

But the intelligence, though unexpected, was not unwelcome. It was, indeed, received with universal satisfaction. The Press, with one accord, spoke of the appointment with approbation; and the Public confirmed the verdict of the Press. All parties were alike sanguine—all prepared to look for good in the new Governor-General. There is not a community on the face of the earth less influenced by the spirit of faction, than the community of British India. To support, or to oppose the measures of a Governor, simply because he is a Whig or a Tory, is an excess of active prejudice wholly unknown in India. There are no political parties, and there is no party Press to play out such a game as this. Public men are judged, not by what they belong to, but by what belongs to them—and thus was Lord Ellenborough judged. Whig and Tory alike hailed the appointment: for the new Governor-General was held in some degree of estimation as one who had made India his study, and cherished a laudable interest in its welfare. He was believed to be possessed of more than average talent; assiduous in his attention to business; and rather an able man of detail than a statesman of very brilliant promise. They, who thought most about the matter, anticipated that he would make a good, steady, peace-governor; that he would apply himself devotedly to the task of improving the internal administration of the country; and by a steady and consistent course of policy soon disengage the country from the pressure of financial embarrassment which had long sate so heavily upon it. They knew little and cared less

about the personal eccentricities which in England had been imputed to him. Neither the Press nor the Public concerned itself about these manifestations of the outer man. They thought of the newly-appointed Governor-General as an able and laborious man of business, with a more than common knowledge of the history of India and the details of its administration. They knew that not only had his occupancy, for many years, of the chief seat at the India Board, rendered him familiar with the workings of the Indian Government; but that, on every occasion, when Indian affairs had been discussed in the House of Lords, in power or out of power, he had taken a prominent part in the debates. In 1833, when the provisions of the existing charter were under the consideration of Parliament, he had distinguished himself as one of the ablest, but most moderate opponents of certain of its clauses, contending in favour of the diminution of the powers of Indian Governors by the imposition of the wholesome control of Council; and earnestly protesting against the perilous evil of leaving too much to the unbridled passions or the erratic caprice of a single man. In later days, he had denounced the war in Afghanistan, in fitting terms of severe censure; and all things combined to render the Indian public hopeful of a good, steady, peaceful administration. Conservative exchanged congratulations with Liberal on the cheering prospects, now opening out before them, of many years of peaceful government and financial prosperity. Lord Ellenborough was believed to be a moderate statesman—somewhat too liberal for the Tories of the ministerial camp, but not for the modified conservatism of India, where every man is more or less a Reformer—and as a moderate statesman all men were prepared to welcome him.

In October, 1841, he was elected to fill the office of

Governor-General; and on the 4th of the following month, he attended the usual complimentary dinner, given on such occasions by the Court of Directors. The report of that dinner, which reached India simultaneously with the intelligence of Lord Ellenborough's appointment, had a natural tendency to increase the confidence, engendered by his Lordship's previous history, in the judgment and moderation of the new Governor-General. On returning thanks, after his health had been drunk, Lord Ellenborough, at that farewell dinner, on the 4th of November, 1841, made a most emphatic declaration of his intentions to govern India upon peace principles; he abjured all thoughts of a war-like, aggressive policy; and declared his settled determination, on assuming the reins of government, to direct all the energies of his mind towards the due cultivation of the arts of peace; to emulate the magnificent benevolence of the Mahomedan conquerors; to elevate and improve the condition of the generous and mighty people of India. He spoke, it is true, in ignorance of the terrible disasters which soon afterwards cast a pall over the land; but there was in the speech so clear and explicit an exposition of what were supposed to be fixed principles, that the Public could not but rejoice over a declaration which promised so much eventual benefit to the people of the soil. They looked forward to the advent of the new Governor-General as to that of a man who, at the earliest possible moment consistent with the dignity of our position, would sever at a blow our ill-fated connexion with Afghanistan, and devote the remaining years of his administration to the practical development of those high principles which he had so enthusiastically professed.*

It is probable that the nomination of Lord Ellen-

* *Calcutta Review.*

borough increased the embarrassments of Lord Auckland, and strengthened him in his resolution to suspend, as far as possible, all retributive measures until the arrival of his successor. There was no public man in England whose opinions, regarding the justice and policy of the war in Afghanistan, had been more emphatically expressed than those of the Governor-General elect. Lord Auckland knew that he was to be succeeded by a statesman who had pronounced the war to be a blunder and a crime; and there was a strong conviction within him that Lord Ellenborough would be eager to withdraw every British soldier from Afghanistan, and to sever at once a connexion which had been attended with so much disaster and disgrace. As the responsible author of the war, this demanded from him no small amount of moral courage. It was, indeed, to court a reversal of the policy which he had originated, and to place the power of a sweeping practical condemnation in the hands of a political rival. If the conduct of Lord Auckland, at this time, were wanting in energy and decision, it was by no means wanting in honesty. He saw that he had committed a blunder of enormous magnitude, and he left it to a statesman of a rival party, and an opposite faith, to pronounce sentence upon it.

But it was not permitted to Lord Auckland so to suspend the progress of events, as to enable him to hand over to his successor only the chart of a virgin campaign, to be accepted or rejected by the new ruler, as might seem fit to him, on taking up the reins of office. It was decreed that his administration should set amidst the clouds of continued disaster. There was nothing but failure to be written down in the concluding chapter of his unfortunate reign. Scarcely had he risen up from the prostration that followed the first stunning effects of the dire intelligence of the massacre in the Caubul

passes, when there came from Peshawur tidings that the brigade under Colonel Wild had been disastrously beaten in the Khybur Pass. The first scene of the new, like the last of the old campaign, was a great calamity; and Lord Auckland, now more than ever dispirited and dejected, earnestly longed for the day when it would be vouchsafed to him to close his portfolio, and to turn his back for ever upon a country where sloughs of difficulty and thickets of danger seemed to cover the whole expanse.*

* It should have been observed, with reference to the statement (*page* 264) of the unwillingness of Sir Jasper Nicolls to strip India of troops for the prosecution of a new campaign beyond the Indus, that Mr. George Clerk at that time entertained very similar opinions regarding the danger of sending more regiments away from the North-Western Provinces. "Whatever may take place," he wrote to Lord Auckland on the 25th of November, "in regard to Caubul, and in whatever degree our troops there may be reinforced, we should not weaken this frontier. Any reduction of our military strength causes some presumption or audacity in our native

allies generally." And on the 29th he wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces (Mr. Robertson): "I really do not see how our muster-roll is to stand this draining of more troops—and probably many more, west—whilst reinforcements are also proceeding eastward. Undoubtedly the remainder will be inadequate to the due maintenance of our high supremacy in India." — [*MS. Correspondence.*] There was, unquestionably, a choice of evils at this time. But Sir Jasper Nicolls and Mr. George Clerk differed in opinion as to which was the greater of the two.

CHAPTER IV.

[January—April: 1842.]

The Halt at Peshawur—Position of Brigadier Wild—His Difficulties—
Conduct of the Sikhs—Attempt on Ali-Musjid—Failure of the Brigade—
Arrival of General Pollock—State of the Force—Affairs at Jellalabad—
Correspondence between Sale and Pollock.

THE position of Brigadier Wild at Peshawur was not one to infuse into a military commander any very overflowing feelings of hope and exultation. He was called upon to encounter formidable difficulties with slender means. Everything, indeed, was against him. He had four Native infantry regiments, containing a large number of young soldiers. They had been exposed for some time to the deteriorating contact of the mutinous Sikh soldiery, who had done their best to fill our Sepoys with that horror of the Khybur to which they had always abandoned themselves. The only cavalry with the brigade was a troop of irregular horse. The only guns were four pieces of Sikh artillery, which had a bad habit of knocking their carriages to pieces whenever they were tried. There was a scarcity of ammunition. Carriage was beginning to fail altogether. It was believed that the camels had been

hired at Ferozepore to proceed as far as Jellalabad; but now the owners declared that they had entered into no such contract, and resolutely refused to proceed further than Peshawur. The most dispiriting intelligence was coming in from Afghanistan. Every day seemed to add some darker tints to the picture of our discomfiture, and to bring out in more prominent colours the triumphant successes of the Afghans. Sale and Macgregor were writing from Jellalabad to urge the immediate advance of the brigade; and General Avitabile was endeavouring, on the other hand, to persuade the Brigadier that it would be dangerous to enter the pass with the force which he then commanded.* The co-operation of the Sikh soldiery, in spite of Avitabile's exertions, seemed every day to become a fainter probability. They peremptorily refused at one time to proceed to Jumrood, from which point it was intended that the operations should commence, and declared that they would return to Lahore. Then threatening to kill Avitabile himself if he interfered with them, they intercepted one of the guns which were moving forward for our use, and carried it back to their lines. It was obvious, indeed, that they desired our discomfiture more than our success; and, in spite of the declared wishes of their Sovereign, whose sincerity at this time is not to be questioned,† and the efforts of

* It was, moreover, of great importance to accelerate the movement, because it was believed that any day might witness the appearance of the Barukzye horsemen on the road between Peshawur and Jellalabad. "Time is most precious to us," wrote Mackeson to Clerk; "a few days more may see a party of the Barukzye troops in the plains of Ningrahar, and then thousands will be required where hundreds would now do the work."

† Shere Singh despatched urgent purwannahs both to General Avita-

bile and to Raze Kishen Chund, calling upon them to aid the British by every means in their power. "You are a general of the Khalsa Government," he wrote to the former, "and noted for the confidence placed in you. This is the time to serve the two allied powers; and you will, therefore, unreservedly devote your attention to discharge your trust, so as to please the two friendly governments, and to earn such a name that the services performed shall be known in London." To the latter he wrote, "Orders have been issued to Koon-

the local governor, did everything that they could do, to render the latter the more probable contingency of the two. The negotiations with the Afreedi chiefs were not going on prosperously, and there was every prospect of heavy opposition in the pass. Under such circumstances, Brigadier Wild could only write that he was prepared to move forward whenever it was expedient to do so, but that he could not answer for the consequences of a precipitate advance.

It was not, however, permitted him to remain long in doubt and inactivity. The fortress of Ali-Musjid lies some five miles within the entrance of the Khybur Pass, and about twenty-five from Peshawur. It consists of two small forts, connected by a wall of little strength, and stands upon the summit of an isolated oblong rock, commanded on the southern and western sides by two lofty hills. It has always been regarded as the key to the Khybur Pass; and it was obvious, now that it was lying between the two positions of Sale and Wild, it was of immense importance that it should be held by British troops or their allies. It had recently been garrisoned by a small detachment of a local

wur Pertab Chund to march to Peshawur, and the zeal of the Durbar will at once make itself manifest to Mr. Clerk (as the sun suddenly shining forth from beneath a cloud) when he is informed of all by the letters of Captain Mackeson."—[*MS. Records.*] When Mackeson received from George Clerk a copy of the purwannah to Avitabile he was in conference at that officer's quarters with the Sikh general, Mehtab Singh, and the commandants of all the Sikh battalions. "I read out this purwannah," says Mackeson, "but was somewhat confounded to find at its conclusion that the Durbar limited the operations of General Avitabile and the Sikh troops to Futtehgurh—their own

frontier post. It was fortunate that, before the arrival of this *purwannah*, the commandants of the auxiliary Mussulman troops had left the room, having previously engaged to march as far as Ali-Musjid in support of our troops, and to move on again with General Pollock's brigade."—[*Mackeson to Clerk: January, 1842. MS. Records.*] The passages referred to in the *purwannah* might bear this construction, but it is doubtful whether this was their intent. George Clerk, in a marginal note to Mackeson's letter, says: "The *purwannah* did not limit it; but directed them to move on to Futtehgurh and act in concert and by Captain Mackeson's advice."—[*MS. Records.*]

corps, composed of men of the Eusofzye tribe—some of whom, under Mr. Mackeson,* had been true to their employers, and, gallantly commanded, gallantly resisted the attacks of the Afreedi clan. But there was now every chance of its falling into the hands of the enemy. Nothing appeared to be of so much primary importance as the occupation of this post. It was resolved, therefore, that one-half of the brigade should be pushed forward, in the first instance, to seize and garrison Ali-Musjid.

Accordingly, on the 15th of January, Colonel Moseley, with the 53rd and 64th Sepoy regiments, prepared to commence the march to Ali-Musjid. They started under cover of the night, and reached their destination soon after daybreak. They met with little opposition on the way; but soon after their arrival under the rock of Ali-Musjid, Captain Mackeson, who had accompanied the force, discovered to his dismay that, instead of 350 supply-bullocks, for the advance of which he had made suitable arrangements, only fifty or sixty now were straggling in with the rear-guard. The remainder, by some mismanagement or miscomprehension of orders, had been left behind. Thus had the two regiments which, had the cattle come on to Ali-Musjid, might have held that place in security for a month, shut themselves up in an isolated fortress without provisions; and the plans which had been so anxiously debated by our political officers at Peshawur, utterly frustrated by an oversight of the most disastrous character, of which it is difficult to determine on whom we are to fix the blame.†

* A cousin of Captain, now Colonel Mackeson. Holding no recognised place in the armies either of the Crown or the Company, his services were neither fairly estimated nor adequately rewarded. But there were few more gallant episodes in the war

than his defence of Ali-Musjid. Mr. Mackeson had been long disabled by extreme sickness, but was carried about in a litter to superintend the defence.

† See *Mackeson to Government: Jan. 27, 1842. Published papers.*

The only hope of extrication from this dilemma, without disaster and discredit, lay in the advance of the two other regiments, with the Sikh guns and the Sikh auxiliaries. But day after day passed, and Mackeson and Moseley gained no certain intelligence of the movements of their comrades. They were more than once under arms to support the coming reinforcements; but the reinforcements never appeared in sight. Wild, with the two regiments, had made an effort to throw supplies into Ali-Musjid, but had been disastrously beaten in the attempt.

Wild was to have moved forward with the Sikh auxiliaries on the morning of the 19th of January, but on the preceding evening, at eleven o'clock, the Sikh troops mutinied to a man, and refused to enter the pass. They were at this time with the British at Jumrood. But when Wild prepared to advance, they turned their faces in an opposite direction, and marched back upon Peshawur.* General Avitabile sent orders to his officers to close the city gates against the mutinous regiments; and then shut himself up in the fort.

At seven o'clock, the 30th and 60th regiments with the Sikh guns commenced their march to Ali-Musjid. The enemy appeared at the entrance of the pass and met the advancing column with a fire from their jezails. The Sepoys at the head of the column wavered, stood still, crowded upon each other, fired anywhere, aimless and

* "The *Nujeebs* struck their tents when we did, and moved back to Peshawur, and the Sikhs made no demonstration, though twice we wrote to General Avitabile during the night; and just before daylight I told him they were not moving, and again at sunrise."—[*Captain H. M. Lawrence to Mr. Clerk: 19th January, 1842.*] Lawrence adds: "I impute no blame to General Avitabile for the man not telling us what we might expect from his miscreant troops. His own intentions are kind and friendly to our government and ourselves." The misconduct of the Sikh troops was rendered more atrocious, and our own mortification more bitter, by the circumstance that Mackeson had advanced a lakh and a half of rupees to the Sikh authorities, for the payment of the men whose services we hoped to retain.

without effect. The officers moved forward, but the regiments did not follow them. In vain the Brigadier and his staff called upon them to advance; they only huddled together in confusion and dismay. The Sikh guns, when brought into action, broke down one after the other; and the Sepoys lost all heart. Lawrence exerted himself manfully to save the guns; but he could not induce the men to make an effort to carry them off; and one of the heavy pieces was finally abandoned.* There was nothing to be done after this but to fall back. The Brigadier himself was wounded in the face; several of our officers were injured; one killed.† The loss among the Sepoys was severe. It was plain that they would not advance; so the column fell back on Jumrood, and Ali-Musjid was not relieved.

How this disaster happened it is not easy to explain. Exaggerated native reports of the immense hordes of Khyburees, who were assembling in the pass, had been in circulation; and the regiments seem to have commenced their march, anticipating such formidable opposition as they were never doomed to encounter. The ominous intelligence from Caubul had alarmed them. The lies spread abroad by the Sikhs had probably alarmed them still more. The opposition was not strenuous.† Had the regiments been in good heart,

* "We have been disgracefully beaten back," wrote Captain Lawrence to Mr. Clerk. "Both our large guns broke down; one was on an elephant, but was taken down to put together when the other failed, but its carriage breaking too, the Sepoys lost all heart, and I grieve to say that I could not get men to bring one off, though I tried for an hour, and at last, finding we were only expending ammunition, we left it in their hands, but it was broken completely down and spiked."—[*MS. Records.*]

† "I confess," wrote Captain Lawrence to Mr. Clerk, "that I never heard any very heavy fire, or saw the enemy in any numbers. I was not with the advance, and therefore may be mistaken; but was afterwards within a hundred yards of the advanced gun for an hour or more, and could see into the pass, but observed no breast-work, and but very few of the enemy; certainly not above a thousand, and not half that number of fire-arms."—[*MS. Records.*]

they would not have been beaten back. But there was anything but a strong forward feeling among them when they commenced their march. The defection of the Sikhs had damped their ardour, and the breaking down of the guns now seemed to complete what the misconduct of our allies had commenced. The first attacks of the enemy threw the Sepoys at the head of the column into confusion; and all hope of success was at an end before a battle had been fought.

The two regiments that occupied Ali-Musjid might have held that post for any length of time against the Khyburees. But they had a lamentable scarcity of provisions. The water, too, seemed to poison them. The troops were put upon half-rations, but in a few days these supplies were nearly exhausted. Without bedding and without tents, kept ever on the alert, under a severe climate, the health of the Sepoys was giving way. They were crowding into hospital. There seemed to be no prospect of relief; so, on the 23rd of January, Colonel Moseley determined to evacuate the fortress of Ali-Musjid, and to cut his way back to Jumrood.

To Mackeson, who saw clearly the political evils that must result from the surrender of so important a position, this was a heavy blow. Anything seemed better than the total abandonment of such a post. A small party of resolute men might hold it; for a small party might be fed. There were at least two men in the garrison eager for the proud distinction of holding, in an imminent conjuncture, a dangerous isolated post against a multitudinous enemy. Captain Burt, of the 64th Native Infantry, volunteered to remain with a party of regular troops; but the Sepoys would not volunteer. Captain Thomas, of the same corps—the staff officer of the detachment—a man of a bold and fearless nature, and of large acquirements—stepped forward and volunteered to

hold the fortress with 150 men of the old Eusofzye garrison. The offer was accepted; arrangements were made for the defence; but the fidelity of the Eusofzyes, which had been long failing, now broke down altogether. They refused to occupy the dangerous post after the departure of the Sepoy regiments; and so, on the 24th, the entire force moved out of Ali-Musjid, and suffered it to fall into the hands of the Afreedis.

"The regiments are safe through—thank God!" was the emphatic announcement which Captain Lawrence, on the 24th of January, forwarded by express to Mr. George Clerk. It had been a time of intense and painful excitement. The communications between the two detachments were cut off, and anxious as they were to act in concert with each other, they had, up to the evening of the 22nd, failed to ascertain the intentions of each other, and to effect a combined movement.* On the 23rd, the two regiments which Wild had commanded, now, owing to the Brigadier's wound, under the charge of Colonel Tulloch, with the two serviceable Sikh guns, went forward to line the pass, and cover the march of Moseley's regiments; but no sound of an advancing column was heard, and about mid-day they returned to camp. On the following morning they moved out again. Moseley had quitted Ali-Musjid, and was making the best of his way to Jumrood. The Khyburees mustered strong; but the Sepoy corps in both detachments did their duty well, and the regiments made good their passage. Captain Wilson, of the 64th, was killed at the head of his men; and Captain Lock, of the 60th, fell also with his sword in his hand. There was some loss of baggage on the retreat—some of the sick and wounded were abandoned; and the general conduct of the affair is not to be dwelt upon

* The two detachments met at the mouth of the pass.

with pride or pleasure. But when the four regiments were once more assembled together at Jumrood, in spite of the disasters of the week, a general feeling of relief was experienced; and our officers congratulated one another, thankful that it was "no worse."

Nothing was to be done now but to wait patiently for the arrival of General Pollock and the reinforcements which were marching up through the Punjaub. It was obvious that, without cavalry and without guns, every effort to relieve Jellalabad must be a disastrous failure. The want of guns was now severely commented upon. Everybody had something to say about the remissness of those in high places, who had suffered the advanced brigade sent for the relief of our beleaguered troops to appear at the mouth of the Khybur Pass without a single piece of British artillery. Brigadier Wild lamented the want of artillery: Colonel Moseley lamented the want of artillery: Captain Mackeson lamented the want of artillery. All were certain that the first effort at retrieval would not have been a new calamity and a new disgrace if a proper complement of British guns had been sent on with the Sepoy regiments. The omission was a great one; but it appears to have been more the result of circumstances than of any culpable negligence on the part of the military authorities. The four Sepoy regiments, forming Wild's brigade, were sent forward by Mr. George Clerk, on a requisition from Captain Mackeson. Mackeson wrote for the immediate despatch of the troops which, before the outbreak at Caubul, had been warned for the ordinary relief. The regiments under orders for Afghanistan were therefore hurried forward, and another regiment, which was on the frontier, ordered to march with them. Expedition rather than efficiency was then sought; and to have got artillery ready for service would

have delayed the despatch of the infantry corps. Captain Lawrence, himself an artillery officer, saw the expediency of despatching artillery to Peshawur, and did not omit to throw out suggestions regarding the preparation of this important arm; but Mr. George Clerk, who was Captain Lawrence's official chief, and subject only to whose confirmation that officer had any authority to call for the despatch of troops, did not follow up the intimation of his subordinate. "Your Excellency will have observed," wrote Mr. Clerk to the Commander-in-Chief,* "that I have limited the requisitions, which I have presumed to make upon the commanding officers of Loodhianah and Ferozepore, to the three infantry regiments which were already preparing to march to Afghanistan. I consider that this is what Captain Mackeson means in his urgent request for the despatch of the brigade warned for the Caubul relief. I therefore have not followed up the intimation made by Captain Lawrence to the commanding officer at Ferozepore regarding artillery and cavalry, by requesting that a detachment of either should move forward."†

It appears, therefore, that Captain Mackeson, at Peshawur, limited his requisitions to the troops actually under orders to proceed, in ordinary routine, to Afghan-

* *Mr. G. Clerk to Sir Jasper Nicolls: November 17, 1841.* I have taken this passage from a MS. copy. It is quoted, however, in the Blue Book, but, with the usual fatality attending such compilations, there are two errors in these few lines. Mr. Clerk is made to say that he had called upon "the commanding officer of Lahore and Ferozepore" to send forward the regiments.

† It is not very clear, however, that Captain Lawrence actually made any written requisition to the commanding officer at Ferozepore (Colo-

nel Wild) for the despatch of artillery details. He wrote a private letter to Mr. Clerk, saying: "If four guns can be made effective, they also shall be got ready." In this letter he says that he was about to call upon Colonel Wild, and may orally have broached the subject of the guns; but in his official letter, written on the same day (November 14), there is no mention of artillery, although he suggests the expediency of sending forward the 10th Cavalry without delay.

istan—that Captain Lawrence, at Ferozepore, suggested the expediency of sending forward some guns, if they could be got ready; and that Mr. Clerk, at Loodhianah, declined to endorse the suggestion, and left it to the Commander-in-Chief to decide whether any artillery should be sent forward with the Sepoy regiments.

But the power of decision was not in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief. The odium of having sent forward four Native infantry regiments, without cavalry and without guns, has been cast upon Sir Jasper Nicolls. But the truth is, that the regiments had crossed the Sutlej before he knew that they had been ordered forward. He was moving upwards towards the frontier when intelligence of the outbreak in Afghanistan, and the consequent measures of Mr. Clerk, met him as he advanced. On the 18th and 20th of November the two first regiments crossed the Sutlej; and the Commander-in-Chief received the notification of the demand for these regiments not before the 22nd. On the 26th of November the two other regiments crossed the Sutlej; and the Commander-in-Chief did not receive intelligence of their despatch before the 3rd of December.

Thus far it is plain that no discredit attaches to the Commander-in-Chief, or to any other authority, for not having sent forward any guns *with* Wild's brigade. But the question yet remains to be asked why guns were not sent *after* it. Though Mr. Clerk, in the first instance, anxious not to delay the advance of the infantry regiments, made no requisition for artillery, he directed General Boyd's attention to the subject soon after the despatch of those corps, and suggested that one of Wild's regiments should halt on the other side of the Sutlej, whilst the guns were proceeding to join it.* As

* "Though I have not yet heard frontier, I would beg leave to recommend, in anticipation of the speedy that any artillery is ordered up to the

there was no available artillery at Ferozepore, it was proposed that Captain Alexander's troop of Horse Artillery should move at once from Loodhianah to the former station on its way across the frontier; but on hearing that the Commander-in-Chief had ordered some details of a foot artillery battery to be warned for service, Mr. Clerk withdrew his requisition for the movement of the troop beyond the frontier, but still suggested that it should be pushed on to Ferozepore. This was on the 2nd of December.* On the 4th, having heard that some delay must attend the despatch of the details warned by orders of the Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Clerk wrote a letter to Captain Alexander, requesting him, as the means of more rapid movement were at his command, to push on across the Sutlej with all possible expedition.† But a few days afterwards he received a

arrival of reinforcements so necessary on the Sutlej, that artillery should move forward from hence. I shall transmit a copy of this letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Wild, in case he may think proper to halt one of the regiments under his command, until the arrival of such artillery as you consider can best be spared from Loodhianah or Ferozepore; but the latter is, I believe, for want of horses, incapable of moving; and this leaves an insufficiency for the due protection of this border, during an unsettled state of parties at Lahore."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Major-General Boyd: November 27th, 1841. MS. Records.*]

* "Having had the honour to receive from the acting Adjutant-General a statement of the reinforcements which his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has ordered to be put in motion for the purposing of forcing the Khybur, I beg leave to state to you that I would not now wish that the 3rd troop, 2nd Brigade of Horse Artillery, should move from

the British frontier on my requisition, though I do not propose, in consequence of this information, to request Lieutenant-Colonel Rich to recall the order for the intended march hence of that troop to-morrow in progress to Ferozepore."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Major-General Boyd: Loodhianah, December 2nd, 1841. MS. Records.*]

† "Having heard that it is possible the guns which his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has directed to move across the frontier may not be ready to move so immediately as the passage across the Sutlej of your troop may be effected, I deem it to be advisable, adverting to the emergency of the occasion, to recommend that you nevertheless proceed on, in anticipation of the sanction of his Excellency to your doing so, by orders of the Major-General commanding the division issued at my request, provided that you can do so without crippling the means of marching requisite for the artillery, which his Excellency has directed to be put in motion for

letter from Sir Jasper Nicolls, prohibiting the despatch of the Horse Artillery; and he accordingly apprised Captain Alexander that the request made to him on the 4th of December for the advance of the troop was withdrawn.* And so, instead of a troop of Horse Artillery being sent to overtake Wild's brigade, which reached Peshawur at the end of December, half of a foot artillery battery was warned to proceed with M'Caskill's brigade, which did not arrive before the beginning of February. In the interval, Wild had been disastrously beaten in the Khybur Pass, and Ali-Musjid had fallen into the hands of the Afreedis.

Whatever may have been the causes of this first failure, and to whomsoever its responsibility may attach, it is certain that its results were of a very dispiriting and deteriorating character. The regiments remained inactive in the vicinity of Peshawur; and the usual consequences of inactivity, under such circumstances were soon painfully apparent in the camp of Brigadier Wild. The Sepoys fell sick; crowded into hospital; seemed to have lost all heart, and, without any of the audacity of open mutiny, broke out into language only a little way removed from it. Exposed to the alarming hints and the alluring temptations of the mutinous Sikh soldiery, some began to desert their colours, whilst others openly declared that nothing would induce them

the frontier, and which should follow as expeditiously as possible."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Captain Alexander, commanding 3rd troop, 2nd Brigade of Horse Artillery: Dec. 4, 1841. MS. Records.*]

* "I do myself the honour to inform your Excellency that, in consequence of my receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 2nd instant, prohibiting the advance of horse artil-

lery as a reinforcement to proceed to Afghanistan, I have apprised Captain Alexander, commanding the 3rd troop, 2nd brigade, now on its way to Ferozepore, and Major Huish, commanding that station, that they are to consider the request made by me, for the advance of that troop, to be withdrawn."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Sir Jasper Nicolls: Dec. 7, 1841.*]

again to face the horrors of the Khybur Pass. As General Pollock advanced through the Punjaub, the worst reports continued to meet him from Peshawur. Not only was he informed that the Sepoys of Wild's brigade were enfeebled by disease and paralysed by terror; but that even the officers of the force were using, in an unguarded and unworthy manner, the language of disheartenment and alarm.*

On the 5th of February, General Pollock reached Peshawur; and found that the stories, which had met him on the road, had by no means exaggerated the condition of the troops under Brigadier Wild. There were then 1000 men in hospital; and the number was alarmingly increasing. In a few days it had increased to 1800; so that even with the new brigade, which marched in a day or two after the General's arrival, he had, exclusive of cavalry, scarcely more troops fit for service than Wild had commanded a month before.

An immediate advance on Jellalabad was not, under such circumstances, to be contemplated for a moment. General Pollock had much to do before he could think of forcing the Khybur Pass and relieving Jellalabad. The duties of a General are not limited to operations in the field. When Pollock reached Peshawur he found that the least difficult part of the labour before him was the subjugation of the Afreed tribes. "Any precipi-

* On the 29th of January, Sir Jasper Nicolls wrote to General Pollock: "My dear General,—In some late letters Captain Lawrence has expressed himself in a very decided manner touching the disheartened and unguarded language held by officers belonging to the corps which were beaten back in the Khybur Pass on the 19th instant. God forbid that they should feel any panic, or even alarm; but if you observe it, I rely on your addressing yourself to them

in a very forcible manner, and shaming them out of such very unbecoming, unmilitary, and dangerous conduct. Their duty is obedience—prompt and energetic obedience—such as executes without expression of doubt. If more has been said than the case seemed to require, take no notice of this further than to warn Captain L., if you think proper to do so.—Always yours faithfully,

"J. NICOLLS."

[MS. Correspondence.]

tancy," wrote the Commander-in-Chief some time afterwards, "on the part of a general officer panting for fame might have had the worst effect."* To have advanced on Jellalabad in that month of February would have been to precipitate a strangling failure. Instead of flinging himself headlong into the pass, Pollock made his way to the hospitals. On the day after his arrival he visited the sick of the different regiments, inquired into their wants, conversed with their medical attendants, endeavoured to ascertain the causes of the prevalent sickness, and encouraged by every means at his command, by animating words and assuring promises, the dispirited and desponding invalids.

Nor was there less to do out of the hospitals. The *morale* of the troops was in the lowest possible state. It seemed, indeed, as though all their soldierly qualities were at the last gasp. The disaffection of the Sepoys broke out openly, and four out of the five regiments refused to advance. Nightly meetings of delegates from the different regiments of Wild's brigade were held in camp; and the 26th Regiment of Native Infantry, which had come up with M'Caskill's brigade, was soon brought into the confederacy. In less than forty-eight hours after the arrival of that corps, active emissaries from the disaffected regiments were busy among the men, not only working upon their fears, but appealing to their religious feelings.† The taint seems to have reached

* *Sir Jasper Nicolls to Lord Hill: Simlah, September 2nd, 1842.*—[*MS. Correspondence.*] In this letter, which will be found entire in the Appendix, the Commander-in-Chief says: "When Major-General Pollock arrived at Peshawur he found 1800 men of the four regiments in hospital; the Sepoys declaring that they would not again advance through the Khybur Pass; the Sikh troops spreading

alarm, and in all ways encouraging and screening their desertion, which was considerable. It was well that a cautious, cool officer of the Company's army should have to deal with them in such a temper 363 miles from our frontier. General Pollock managed them extremely well."

† An intelligent and trustworthy officer of the 26th Native Infantry, whose letter is now before me, writes:

even to some of the officers of Wild's brigade, who did not hesitate openly to express at the mess-table the strongest opinions against a second attempt to force the Khybur, or to declare their belief that very few would ever return to Peshawur. One officer publicly asserted that it would be better to sacrifice Sale's brigade than to risk the loss of 12,000 men on the march to Jellalabad; and another said that, if an advance were ordered, he would do his best to dissuade every Sepoy of his corps from again entering the pass.*

To instil new courage and confidence into the waverers was no easy task; but coolly and sagaciously, as one who understood the causes of their disheartenment, and could make some allowances for their misconduct, Pollock addressed himself to the work of reanimating and reassuring them. He made them feel that they had been placed under the care of one who was mindful of their welfare and jealous of their honour—one who overlooked nothing that contributed to the health and comfort of his men, and who would never call upon them to make sacrifices which he himself was not prepared to make. There was, in all that he did, such an union of kindness and firmness—he was so mild, so considerate, and yet so decided—that the Sepoys came in time to regard him with that childlike faith which,

"In less than forty-eight hours after our (the 9th Foot and 26th Native Infantry) arrival, active emissaries, particularly from the 53rd and 60th Regiments, were in our camp, using every effort to induce our men to desert, and to refuse to enter the Khybur; and had actually gone the length of sending Brahmins with the Gunga Jul to swear them in not to advance; and did not desist until orders were given to seize the first man caught in the lines under suspicious circumstances. This informa-

tion was several times communicated to me by old Sepoys and non-commissioned officers, and the fact of the attempts made to reduce the men from their allegiance is too well known to the officers of the 26th to admit of a moment's doubt."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

* *MS. Correspondence.* I need not say that these statements would not be made except upon the testimony of officers who heard the speeches to which I have referred.

under prosperous circumstances, is one of their most noticeable characteristics; and when the hour of trial came they were not found wanting.

All through the months of February and March, Pollock and his regiments remained inactive in the neighbourhood of Peshawur. Mortifying as it was to the General to be compelled to halt so long at the entrance of the Khybur Pass, no other course was open to him, at the time, that did not threaten renewed disaster. Pollock's position was, doubtless, painful, but it was not perplexing. His duty in this conjuncture was plain. The eyes of all India were turned upon him. The safety of the gallant garrison of Jellalabad was to be secured by his advance. Sale and Macgregor were writing urgent letters, calling upon him to push on without delay; but it was still his duty to halt. The Sepoys were gradually recovering both their health and their spirits. But reinforcements were coming across the Punjaub, with British dragoons and horse artillery

- among them; and nothing did more to animate and reassure those, who had been discouraged by previous failure, than the knowledge that when they readvanced they would be supported by fresh troops strong in every branch, and numbering among them a good proportion of stout European soldiers. Had the advance been ordered before the arrival of these reinforcements, it is at least a probable contingency that some of the Native regiments would have stood fast, and, by open mutiny almost in the face of the enemy, have heaped up before us a mountain of difficulty, such as no prudence and no energy on the part of a commander could ever suffice to overcome.

Still it required much firmness to resist the pressing appeals made to Pollock by his comrades at the other end of the Khybur Pass. He had not been many days

at Peshawur before he received the following communication from General Sale, setting forth the exigencies of the Jellalabad garrison, and urging him to advance to their relief. The letter, written partly in English and partly in French, is at once curious and important:

Jellalabad, February 14th, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

Captain Maegregor's cossids yesterday brought me the information of your arrival at Peshawur, and of full military and political powers in Afghanistan being vested in you. I lose no time in sending such a view of the state of this garrison as may enable you to form your own opinion on the necessity of moving to its relief. Nous avons des provisionnemens pour les soldats Britanniques pour soixante-dix jours, pour les Sipahis et les autres natifs demi-provisionnemens pour le même temps, et pour les chevaux de la cavalerie et l'artillerie de large pour vingt-cinq jours. Autant que nous pouvons renvoyer nos parties pour la fourrage, nous ne manquerons cela pour la cavalerie, mais nous serons entièrement privé de cette ressource après le premier jour d'investissement. A présent nous n'avons de fourrage que pour trente jours pour tous les animaux. Les chevaux d'artillerie et les yaboos des sapeurs sont de ce pays et mangent seulement boozent kurlise. Nous manquons beaucoup aussi des munitions de guerre, plomb, &c.

When our animals can no longer be sustained by corn or forage only, we must of course destroy them. The hospitals are ill supplied with medicines, and much sickness may be apprehended when the weather grows hot. At present the health of the garrison is excellent. We have no prospect of adding to our resources above detailed even if we had money, which we have not. The country possesses abundance of supplies, of which the presence of a force would give us command.

Mahomed Akbar is at Cherbyl, in the Lughman district, and threatens an attack; and we may, in about fifteen days, though I think not sooner, be invested by a large force from Caubul, with a considerable artillery.

Believe me to be, my dear General,

Yours very truly,

RT. SALE, M.-G.

P.S.—I shall view la perte of my cavalry, should such occur, with much sorrow, as from their successes against the enemy they have acquired a confidence in themselves and contempt for their enemies, which feeling is equally participated in by the rest of the troops. As I cannot now get an opportunity to send you a return, I give a memorandum:—Cavalry, effective, deux cents quarante-un; malade, vingt-un. Artillerie, effective, un cent soixante-onze; malade, quarante-onze. Sapeurs, effective, trois cents quatre; malade, quarante-cinq. Infanterie Britannique, effective, sept cents dix-neuf; malade, trente. Sipahis, effective, huit cents trente-huit; malade, quarante-huit.

February 16.—Hier Mahomed Akbar a passé la rivière, et a pris position sur ce côté près de dix milles de cette ville. On dit qu'il a des soldats de tous armés et quatre pièces de canon. On peut voir son camp d'ici.

R. SALE.

February 16.—I have received this morning yours of the 9th instant. S'ils n'envoyent pas des canons de siège de Caubul, *peut-être* je puis maintenir ma position dans cette ville pour le temps que vous avez écrit; mais si une force avec les pièces (que nous avons perdu) arriveront ici, ce sera impossible, et avant cette époque nos chevaux mourront de faim. Il sera bien difficile et incertain de vous donner avis de mon intention de retirer, parce qu'à ce moment Mahomed Akbar est près avec une force de deux milles hommes (qui s'augmente jour par jour), et à présent ses patrouilles et videttes parcourent tout le pays.

RT. SALE, M.-G.*

A few days afterwards Sale again wrote to urge Pollock's advance. A great calamity had befallen the Jellalabad garrison. On the morning of the 19th of February the men were busied with their accustomed

* *MS. Records.* It will, doubtless, occur to the reader that in this letter Sale adopted the French disguise to very little purpose. The object of corresponding in this hybrid language was to prevent the meaning of the letters from transpiring in the event of their falling into the hands of the enemy, who had been people in their em-

ploy capable of translating English. But Sale, in this letter, seems to have blurted out, in the plainest English, all that it was most expedient to conceal. He was too old a soldier to be very clever in such devices; and he had been too long fighting the battles of his country in India to write very unexceptionable French.

labour. With their arms piled within reach, they were plying axe and shovel, toiling with their wonted cheerfulness and activity at the defences, which they had begun to look upon with the satisfied air of men who had long seen their work growing under their hands, and now recognised the near approach of its completion. They had worked, indeed, to good purpose. Very different were the fortifications of Jellalabad from what they had been when Sale entered the place in November.* They were now real, not nominal defences. The unremitting toil of nearly three months had not been without its visible and appreciable results. It seemed, too, as though the work were about to be completed just at the time when the defences were most needed. Akbar Khan was in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad, and every day Sale expected that he would have to meet the flower of the Barukzye horse on the plain. But on this 19th of February, when the garrison were flushed with joy at the thought of the near completion of their work, a fearful visitation of Providence, suddenly and astoundingly, turned all their labour to very nothingness. There was an awful and mysterious sound, as of thunder beneath their feet; then the earth shook; the houses of the town trembled and fell; the ramparts of the fort seemed to reel and totter, and presently came down with a crash.† On the first

* The work of the Jellalabad garrison was not confined to the strengthening of their own defences. The destruction of all the adjoining cover for the enemy was no small part of their labour. With reference to these works, General Sale says, in his official report: "Generally I may state that they consisted in the destruction of an immense quantity of cover for the enemy, extending to the demolition of forts and old walls, filling up ravines and destroying gardens, and cutting down groves, raising the

parapets to six or seven feet high, repairing and widening the ramparts, extending the bastions, retrenching three of the gates, covering the fourth with an outwork, and excavating a ditch ten feet in depth and twelve feet in width round the whole of the walls. The place was thus secure against the attacks of any Asiatic army not provided with siege artillery."

† "But it pleased Providence, on the 19th of February, to remove in an instant this ground of confidence. A

sound of the threatened convulsion the men had instinctively rushed to their arms, and the greater number had escaped the coming ruin; but it is still among those recollections of the defence which are dwelt upon by the "illustrious garrison" in the liveliest spirit of jocularity, how the field-officer of the day—a gallant and good soldier—but one who had more regard for external proprieties than was generally appreciated in those days, was buried beneath a heap of rubbish, and how he was extricated from his perilous position by some men of the 13th, under circumstances which even now they enjoy in the retrospect with a relish which years have not impaired.

Sale and Macgregor were both writing to Pollock when the earthquake threw down the walls of Jellalabad, and in a minute wrought more irreparable mischief than a bombarding army could have done in a month. Sale, still writing in French, reported the state of the garrison; whilst Macgregor described the incidents of the fearful visitation which had just descended upon them:

Jellalabad, February 19th, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

* * *

A l'égard à mon pouvoir de maintenir ma position ici, j'ai déjà vous donné avis de tous mes moyens et

tremendous earthquake shook down all our parapets, built up with so much labour, injured several of our bastions, cast to the ground all our guard-houses, demolished a third of the town, made a considerable breach in the rampart of a curtain in the Peshawur face, and reduced the Caubul gate to a shapeless mass of ruins. It savours of romance, but is a sober fact, that the city was thrown into alarm, within the space of little more than one month, by the repetition of full one hundred shocks of this terrific phenomenon of nature."—[*Report of General Sale: Jellalabad, April 16,*

1842.] "On the 19th of February, an earthquake, which nearly destroyed the town, threw down the greater part of the parapets, the Caubul gate with two adjoining bastions, and a part of the new bastion which flanked it. Three other bastions were also nearly destroyed, whilst several large breaches were made in the curtain, and the Peshawur side, eighty feet long, was quite practicable, the ditch being filled, and the descent easy. Thus in one moment the labours of three months were in a great measure destroyed."—[*Report of Capt. Broadfoot, Garrison Engineer.*]

resource. Je n'ai pas rien de craindre de la force à present avec Akbar Khan, même si il est joint par tous les colers de Ningraher; mais je veux bien que vous vous comprenez que nos parapets ne sont pas assez forts pour resister les bouts de canon, et il est sujet de doute si nous pouvons resister une siege pour peu de temps si l'enemi envoient des pieces de siege de Cabul; et en aucune cas les chevaux de la cavalerie et de l'artillerie comme les yaboos et les chameaux après vingt-cinq jours periront. Cette epoque le rendre impossible pour nous à vous ajouter dans aucun plan de retraite que vous voudrais; et de plus il sera impossible communiquer avec vous au moment que je me trouverais au point d'être écrassé (overwhelmed) par une force irresistible. En perdant las yaboos et les chameaux, que sont absolument necessaire pour les travaux de la fortification, je perd aussi tous mes moyens de transporter mes malades et les munitions de guerre, sans laquelle il ne faut pas contempler une retraite. J'ai extreme Soixante-huite chameaux et *cinq* trente neuf* yaboos. Ces circonstances me semble de demander que votre avance à notre secours sera prompt—the only means of securing the avowed object of government, *i.e.*, the relief of the troops who have so long defended Jellalabad. After writing the above, the dreadful earthquake of this day a fait tomber deux bastions, et plusieurs autres sont culles—une breche de cote de Peshawur dans les murs et beaucoup des maisons (casemecs) aussi. Sans doute l'enemi prend avantage de cet calamité. Nous travaillons sans cesse de reparer le dedommage.

Believe me to be, my dear General, yours, very truly,

R. SALE, M.-Genl.† *

* So worded in the original.

† *MS. Records*.—I give the postscript to this letter in a note, though of no historical importance, as I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting a tribute to the worth of one whom I am proud to recognise as a fellow-labourer in the field of Afghan history: "P.S.—Understanding from the 3rd para. of the letter from the Adjutant-Gen. that the authority of Major-Gen. Elphinstone has ceased, I venture to mention to you that Captain Havelock, 13th L.I., was appointed in general orders Persian Interpreter to the M. General so long as he continued to command in Afghanistan. He was by his permission,

however, attached to me from the period of my force leaving Caubul, and I have received from him very valuable assistance in every way throughout our operations, as I have already intimated in public despatches. I trust you will pardon my undertaking to say, that if you would be pleased to re-appoint him to the same situation under yourself, I feel persuaded that his local experience would render him most useful to you. In the mean time I have nominated him Per. Intr. to myself, subject to confirmation, as I cannot, under present circumstances, dispense with his services. Be good enough to make this known also to H. E. the C. in C."

Jellalabad, February 19th, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

* * * Since I commenced writing to you, we have been visited by a very severe earthquake, which has in a great measure demolished two or three of our bastions, and nearly the whole of the parapet of the ramparts, to raise which cost the troops more than a couple of months of hard labour. A number of houses in the town have been thrown down by the shock, and the small court-yard attached to the house in which the General and myself reside, is filled with the rubbish of a number of out-offices which fell crashing at our feet, we having sought the centre of the yard as a place of safety. It was with difficulty we could preserve our footing, so great was the undulating motion of the ground we stood upon. Our dwelling-house seemed to heave to and fro as if it would topple on us. I have not heard of more than two or three persons who have been killed by the falling houses or walls. Colonel Monteith was buried up to the neck; but he has not, I believe, sustained any serious injury. If this town had been seriously bombarded for a month, I don't think it could have suffered more than at present. God grant that we may not have to witness anything so fearful again. I feel still giddy, although the earthquake took place a couple of hours ago. It is to be expected that on the enemy discovering the damage which our defences have sustained, they will be encouraged to attack us.

Gold mohurs and bootkees would be of use to us, but I fear that Mackeson would find it impracticable to send them to us in safety.

Captain Bygrave is alive and with Mahomed Akbar Khan. Captain Souter, 44th Regiment, is also there. He saved the Queen's colour of his regiment by rolling it round his waist, and he writes that a shot struck him there, and the colour saved his life.

Believe me, very truly yours,

G. H. MACGREGOR.

But, in nowise disheartened by this calamity, the Jellalabad garrison again took the spade and the pickaxe into their hands, and toiled to repair the mischief. "No time," says Captain Broadfoot, "was lost. The shocks had scarcely ceased when the whole garrison was told off into working parties, and before night the

breaches were scarped, the rubbish below cleared away, and the ditches before them dug out, whilst the great one on the Peshawur side was surrounded by a good gabion parapet. A parapet was erected on the remains of the north-west bastion, with an embrasure allowing the guns to flank the approach of the ruined Caubul gate; the parapet of the new bastion was restored, so as to give a flanking fire to the north-west bastion, whilst the ruined gate was rendered inaccessible by a trench in front of it, and in every bastion round the place a temporary parapet was raised. From the following day all the troops off duty were continually at work, and such was their energy and perseverance, that by the end of the month the parapets were entirely restored, or the curtain filled in where restoration was impracticable, and every battery re-established. The breaches have been built up, with the rampart doubled in thickness, and the whole of the gates retrenched."—Such, indeed, was the extraordinary vigour thrown into the work of restoration—such the rapidity with which the re-establishment of the defences was completed, that the enemy, seeing soon afterwards no traces of the great earthquake-shock of the 19th of February, declared that the phenomenon must have been the result of English witchcraft, for that Jellalabad was the only place that had escaped.

If Akbar Khan, who at this time was within a few miles of Sale's position, knew the extent to which the defences of Jellalabad had been weakened, he committed a strange oversight in not taking advantage of such a casualty. The garrison felt assured that the Barukzyes would not throw away such a chance; and they made up their minds resolutely for the encounter. Intelligence had just been received of the publication of the government manifesto of the 31st of January; and this spasmodic burst of energy and indignation, wel-

came as an indication of the intention of the Supreme Government to wipe out at all hazards the stains that had been fixed upon the national honour, fortified and reassured the heroes of Jellalabad, who had been grieving over the apparent feebleness and apathy of the official magnates at Calcutta.*

They had felt, with some acuteness of mortification, the neglect to which they had seemingly been subjected;† but all personal feeling was soon drowned in an overwhelming sense of what was due to their insulted country. Now, therefore, that Lord Auckland had declared that he regarded the disasters that had befallen us merely as so many new opportunities of demonstrating the military power of the British Empire in the East, the hearts of the brave men, who had been so long defying the enemy that had destroyed Elphinstone's army, again began to leap up with hope and exultation; and as they saw their defences rising again, almost as it were by supernatural agency, before their eyes, they began rather to regret the caution of the Barukzye chief which seemed to restrain him from venturing under the walls of Jellalabad.

There seems, indeed, to have been in the Afghan

* "The officers of the garrison," wrote Macgregor to Pollock on the 21st of February, "came upon rations to-day. They are willing to brave all difficulties and dangers, now that they feel certain that government will resent the insult offered to our national honour by these rascally Afghans." And again, on the same day, writing to the same correspondent, he said: "I am glad to find that government intend to uphold the national honour by resenting the insults which have been offered to it by the rascally Afghans; and I feel assured that this garrison will continue to perform the part which has devolved upon them at this crisis with credit to them-

selves and advantage to the state. General Sale intends to publish in to-day's garrison orders the proclamation of the Indian Government, a copy of which you kindly sent to me by Torabaz's Sowars."—[MS. *Correspondence.*]

† The rescue of the Jellalabad garrison had in reality been the primary—indeed, the sole acknowledged reason of the movement in advance; but the Supreme Government, whilst by no means unmindful of the claims of the Jellalabad garrison, long omitted to communicate with Sale or Macgregor—to convey to them directly any instructions for their guidance, or any expressions of approbation of their conduct.

camp a strange shrinking from anything like a hand-to-hand encounter with the intrepid soldiers of Sale's brigade. The reluctance of Akbar Khan to near the walls of Jellalabad is a painful commentary upon the arrogance and audacity of the Afghans, who a few weeks before had been bearding Elphinstone and Shelton under the shadow of the Caubul cantonments. Akbar Khan now seemed resolute to risk nothing by any dashing movement, that might decide, at once, the fate of the Jellalabad garrison. Instead of assaulting the place he blockaded it.

He seemed to trust to the efficacy of a close investment; and so moved in his troops nearer and nearer to our walls, hoping to effect that by starvation which he could not effect by hard fighting in the field. And so, for some time, he continued, drawing in more and more closely—harassing our foraging parties, and occasionally coming into contact with the horsemen who were sent out to protect the grass-cutters. Not, however, before the 11th of March was there any skirmishing worthy of record. Then it was reported that the enemy were about to mine the place. *Sungahs* had been thrown up on the night of the 10th, and the enemy were firing briskly from behind them. It was plain that some mischief was brewing; so on the morning of the 11th, Sale, keeping his artillery at the guns on the ramparts, sent out a strong party of infantry and cavalry, with two hundred of Broadfoot's sappers. Dennie commanded the sortie. As they streamed out of the Peshawur gate of the city, Akbar Khan seemed inclined to give them battle. But ever as the enemy advanced the hot fire from our guns drove them back. They could not advance upon our works, nor protect the *sungahs* which our skirmishers were rapidly destroying. It was soon ascertained that the story of the mine was a mere fable; ammunition was

too scarce to be expended on any but necessary service; so there was nothing more to be done. Dennie sounded the recall. The British troops began to fall back upon their works; and then the enemy, emboldened by the retrograde movement, fell upon our retiring column; and though, no sooner had our people halted and reformed, than the Afghans turned and fled, they wrought us some mischief, for they wounded Broadfoot; and those were days when an accident to the garrison engineer was, indeed, a grievous calamity. Not a man, however, of Sale's brigade was killed. The carnage was all among the enemy.

The remainder of the month passed quietly away—but the anxieties of the garrison were steadily increasing. Provisions had become scarce; ammunition was scarce; fodder for the horses was not to be obtained. It was obviously the design of the enemy to reduce the garrison by a strict blockade. It would be difficult to exaggerate the eagerness with which, under such circumstances, they looked for the arrival of succours from Peshawur. Excellent as were Pollock's reasons for not proceeding to the relief of Jellalabad until his force was strengthened by the arrival of the European regiments on their way to Peshawur, it is easy to understand, and impossible to condemn, the eagerness with which Sale and Macgregor continued to exhort him to advance for their succour. The correspondence, brief but emphatic, which passed between the two Generals at this time, better than anything else unfolds the real nature of their respective positions. On the 8th of March Sale despatched this letter to Pollock:

Jellalabad, March 8th, 1842, 9 P.M.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I had the pleasure of receiving a few hours ago yours of the 26th ultimo. I must confess that its contents have deeply

disappointed me, since I gather from it that it is not your intention to advance to my succour until you shall have been reinforced by the brigade which you expect to reach Peshawur on the 22nd instant. Now, independently of other considerations, Macgregor will inform you that he yesterday got a Dust-i-Khat from the Shah's Durbar at Caubul, demanding categorically our evacuation of this place. He referred the King and his councillors to you, and their next measure will probably be to march an overwhelming force against us, aided by our captured iron nine-pounders. I have reiterated in several letters the fact that *mes mains ne sont pas assez forts pour resister tel artillerie*, and therefore desire to make you once more fully aware of the risk, if not certainty, of our being overpowered if your advance to our support is not sufficiently prompt to anticipate this movement of our enemies. The responsibility, therefore, of such a result, will now rest entirely upon you, and not on me. Money is not now of the slightest use to me, Mahomed Akbar having established a most rigid blockade, which effectually prevents all supplies from reaching us. Our foraging parties are also daily attacked.

Believe me to be, my dear General, yours sincerely,

ROBERT SALE, M.-G.

P.S.—As I remark that your letter does not contain any distinct avowal of an intention of advancing even when your reinforcements reach you, I shall be obliged, for the sake of this garrison, if you will specifically inform me when it is probable I may calculate on its being relieved.*

At the same time Macgregor despatched another letter of a similar tendency, and to this letter Pollock replied:

March 12th, 1842.

MY DEAR MACGREGOR,

I will write you a very short note with reference to yours and Sale's of the 8th. It must no doubt appear to you and Sale most extraordinary that, with the force I have here, I do not at once move on. God knows it has been my anxious wish to do so, but I have been helpless. I came on ahead to Peshawur to

* *MS. Correspondence.*

arrange for an advance, but was saluted with a report of 1900 sick, and a bad feeling among the Sepoys. I visited the hospitals, and endeavoured to encourage by talking to them, but they *had no heart*. I hoped that when the time came they would go. This, however, I could not write to you or Sale in *ink*, either in English or French. On the 1st instant the feeling on the part of the Sepoys broke out; and I had the mortification of knowing that the Hindoos, of four out of five native corps, refused to advance. I immediately took measures to sift the evil, and gradually a reaction has taken place, in the belief that I will wait for reinforcements. This has caused me the utmost anxiety on your account. Your situation is never out of my thoughts; but having told you what I have, you and Sale will at once see that necessity alone has kept me here.

I have sent five expresses to hurry on the first division of the next brigade. It consists of the 3rd Dragoons, a troop of Horse Artillery, 1st Light Cavalry, the 33rd N.I., and two companies of the 6th N.I., all fresh and without a taint. I really believe that if I were to attempt to move on now without the reinforcement, the four regiments implicated would, as far as the Hindoos are concerned, stand fast. Pray, therefore, tell me, without the least reserve, the latest day you can hold out. If I could, I would tell you the day when I expect reinforcements, but I cannot. I may, however, I believe with safety say, that they will arrive by the end of this month.

The case, therefore, now stands thus:—Whether I am to attempt with my present materials to advance, and to risk the appearance of disaffection or cowardice, which in such a case could not again be got over, or wait the arrival of a reinforcement, which will make all sure. This is the real state of the case. If I attempted now, it might risk you altogether; but if you can hold out, the reinforcements would make your relief as certain as any earthly thing can be.

Our only object in going to Jellalabad is to relieve you and bring you back with us to this; but it is necessary that this should be kept a profound secret.

I am, &c. &c.

GEORGE POLLOCK.*

* This letter is given in the published papers.

To this Sale replied:

Jellalabad, 23rd March, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

Yesterday arrived yours of the 12th instant, addressed jointly to Captain Macgregor and myself. I have only, in reply thereto, to say that in my last I informed you definitively that I would, by God's blessing, hold this place to the 31st instant, by which time you acquainted me that you could arrive at Jallalabad with the dragoons. You now state to me your expectation that they will only reach your present encampment by that date. Our European soldiers are now on two-thirds of their rations of salt meat, and this the commissariat supply; on the 4th proximo that part of the force will then be without meat, notwithstanding every arrangement to lessen the consumption. I have this day directed all the camels to be destroyed, with the view of preserving the *boosa* for the horses of the cavalry and artillery; and these valuable animals cannot receive any rations of grain whatever after the 1st proximo, but must be subsisted entirely on *boosa* and grass, if the latter can be procured.*

Believe me to be, yours sincerely,

R. SALE.*

Pollock had expected the dragoons would reach Peshawur by the 20th of March; but on the 27th they had not arrived; and the General wrote to Jellalabad, explaining the causes of delay, but still hoping that he would be able to commence his march on the last day of the month. "There appears," he wrote, "to be nothing but accidents to impede the advance of the dragoons. They were five days crossing the Ravee. I have sent out 300 camels to help them in; and I hope nothing will prevent my moving on the 31st. God knows I am most anxious to move on, for I know that delay will subject us to be exposed to very hot weather. But my situation has been most embarrassing. Any attempt at a forward movement in the early part of this month I do not think would have succeeded, for at one time

* MS. Correspondence.

the Hindoos did not hesitate to say that they would *not* go forward. I hope the horror they had has somewhat subsided; but without more white faces I question even now if they would go. Since the 1st we have been doing all to recover a proper tone; but you may suppose what my feelings have been, wishing to relieve you, and knowing that my men would not go. However desirable it is that I should be joined by the 31st Regiment, your late letters compel me to move, and I hope, therefore, to be with you by about the 7th. I cannot say the day exactly, because, I want to take Ali-Musjid. When that is taken, your situation may, perhaps, become better.* The dragoons reached Pollock's camp on the 30th, and on the following day he began to move forward.

* *General Pollock to General Sale: March 27th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* Pollock did not exaggerate the backwardness of the Native regiments, or the importance of associating with them a larger body of Europeans. Even the new corps which were moving up from the provinces, and which the General believed to be "without a taint," were openly expressing their disinclination to advance. Shere Singh mentioned this to Mr. Clerk. "Yesterday, early," wrote the latter, "the Maharajah, Rajah Dhyani Singh, and myself being together for a short time, quite unattended, they told me that Commandant Cheyt Singh, who had come into Lahore for a day from Colonel Bolton's camp, to escort which

from Ferozepore to Peshawur the Durbar had appointed him, had mentioned that our Sepoys in that brigade did not like going to the westward, and were sometimes grouped eight or ten together, expressing their dissatisfaction; but that on the other hand the Europeans (her Majesty's 31st and artillery) were much delighted at the prospect of fighting with the Afghans. The Maharajah added, 'If you could send two or three more European corps, they would penetrate the Khybur or anywhere else so successfully against the Afghans, that the Hindoos, who are now alarmed, would, after one action, all take heart again.'"—[*Mr. Clerk to Government: Lahore, March 19th, 1842. MS. Records.*]

CHAPTER V.

[April, 1842.]

The Forcing of the Khybur Pass—State of the Sikh Troops—Mr. Clerk at the Court of Lahore—Views of the Lahore Durbar—Efforts of Shere Singh—Assemblage of the Army at Jumrood—Advance to Ali-Musjid—Affairs at Jellalabad—Defeat of Akbar Khan—Junction of Pollock and Sale.

WHATEVER embarrassments may have lain in the way of General Pollock during these months of February and March, and compelled him, eager as he was to advance to the relief of Jellalabad, to remain inactive at Peshawur, it is certain that they were greatly increased by the reluctance of our Sikh allies to face the passes of the Khybur. The conduct of the Nujeeb battalions, which had mutinied on the very eve of Wild's movement into the pass, left no room to hope for any effectual co-operation from that source. All the efforts of Captain Lawrence to obtain any assistance from the Sikh troops at Peshawur, through General Mehtab Singh,* had failed;

* Shere Singh was at this time a confirmed drunkard, and he thought more of potations than of politics. When the first intelligence of our Caubul disasters reached him, Mr. Clerk wrote: "The effect which these events in Caubul will have on Lahore, will, I imagine, be as follows. The Rajahs will inwardly rejoice thereat; the Khalsa will be vexed at any Mahomedan exultation; and Shere Singh will congratulate himself on the prospect this may open to him of drawing closer his relations with us as a means of procuring good champagne."—[*Mr. Clerk to Mr. Robertson: Nov. 29, 1841. MS. Records.*]

and Lawrence was of opinion that the General's conduct, in admitting the Afreedis into his camp, had established such a clear case of hostility, that he and his traitorous followers ought to be dismissed with disgrace. But now that Rajah Gholab Singh, accompanied by the Crown Prince of Lahore, was advancing with his regiments to Peshawur, as those regiments were composed of a different class of men, and the influence of the Rajah over these hill-levies was great, it was hoped, that on his junction with General Pollock's camp, a new order of things would be established. But it soon became painfully evident to the General that very little cordial co-operation was to be looked for from the Jummoo Rajah and his troops.

When, early in February, Pollock, on his way to Peshawur, reached the Attock, he found the left bank of the river occupied by the Sikh troops under Gholab Singh, whilst the Nujeeb battalions, which had disgraced themselves a few weeks before, were posted on the opposite side.* Captain Lawrence, who had left Peshawur to expedite the Rajah's movements, was then in the Sikh camp; and M'Caskill's brigade was a few marches in the rear. There appeared every likelihood, therefore, of a collision that would impede the progress of the British troops; but the exertions of Pollock and

* Their design was to arrest the progress of Gholab Singh's force; and some of our officers thought that the Rajah ought to have attacked them. But Mr. Clerk was of opinion that his forbearance was a proof of his friendship towards us. "In the same manner," he wrote, "that the reluctance of Rajah Gholab Singh to have recourse to measures of open hostility towards the Mussulman battalions, when arrayed against him across the Attock, was, I believe, in a great measure caused by his apprehension of embarrassing the British brigade

coming up and near at hand, should he be found making of the high road an unseemly and uncertain field of battle for the coercion of mutinous battalions, so I conceive that he may very naturally feel disinclined hastily to pledge himself to take as far as Jellalabad, or into any arduous service, troops which for fourteen months past have generally assumed a tone of defiance of the control of their appointed officers."—[*Mr. George Clerk to Government: February 13, 1842. MS. Records.*]

Lawrence were crowned with success; and the Sikh force, moved off before McCaskill's brigade arrived on the banks of the river. On the 14th, Gholab Singh and the Prince reached Peshawur. On the 20th, Pollock held a conference with the Rajah—Lawrence and Mackeson being present,—and a day or two afterwards, forwarding an abstract of the conversation that had taken place between them, wrote to the Supreme Government:—"I confess that I have no expectation of any assistance from the Sikh troops."

On the conduct of Gholab Singh at this time, some suspicion has been cast. It has been said that he not only instigated, through the agency of an influential messenger, the Nujeeb battalions to rebel, but carried on a friendly correspondence with our Afghan enemies at Cabul. That there was no hearty co-operation, is true; but hearty co-operation was not to be expected. Gholab Singh had other work on hand at that time; and, whilst he was playing and losing a great game in Thibet, it would have been strange, indeed, if he had thrown his heart into the work which he was called upon to perform for others at the mouth of the Khýbur Pass. He had no confidence in his troops. He had no inducement to exert himself.* The latter obstacle, it was thought, might be removed; and Lawrence and Mackeson were of opinion that it would be well to bribe him into activity by the

* Gholab Singh was employed in the Hazareh country in operations against Poyndah Khan and a rebel force when he was summoned to proceed to Peshawur. At this time, too, the Jummoo Rajah had an army in Ladakh and Thibet engaged in active warfare with the Chinese, and it was sustaining serious reverses at the time that Gholab Singh was called upon to aid the British Government. "What with this reverse on the eastern frontier of his possessions," wrote Mr. Clerk to

government, "and the apprehension that in his absence his lately victorious troops will lose ground in the Hazareh country, Rajah Gholab Singh evinces little ardour to co-operate with the Sikh troops at Peshawur. It is also probable that the Jummoo Rajah would rather contemplate the difficulties of the British Government in that quarter, than be instrumental in removing them."—[*Mr. Clerk to Government: January 20, 1842.*]

offer of Jellalabad, to be held by him independently of the Sikh ruler; but Mr. Clerk was of opinion that such a measure would be neither politic nor honest.* It would, indeed, at that time, have been an injustice done by the British Government against both the other parties to the Tripartite treaty. It would have injuriously affected both Shah Soojah and Shere Singh; and would have involved the Jummoo Rajah in difficulties and perplexities from which he would have found it difficult to extricate himself. Indeed, Captain Mackeson himself very soon came to the opinion that, if we desired to bribe Gholab Singh into co-operation by promises of territorial aggrandisement, it was necessary that we should lay our finger on some other part of the map than that which represented Jellalabad; and he asked whether Shikarpoor,

* On the 10th of February Mr. Clerk wrote to the Government Secretary: "There seems to have been no good reason for the delay of Rajah Gholab Singh in crossing the Attock, unless he really feared a collision with the Nujeeb battalions, encamped on the other side. But for the Rajah's apparent reluctance immediately to undertake to co-operate in the Khybur Pass, there may be better grounds. These may be either an apprehension of his inability to oppose the enemy there; or, as supposed by Captain Lawrence, a want of incentive to exertion — or both these causes may retard his movements. In regard to the former, the presence of the large body of British troops assembling at Peshawur will encourage him. With respect to the latter, I should be glad to be provided with the instructions of government." — [*MS. Records.*]

Writing again, on the 13th of February, he says: "In regard to the means of inducing zealous co-operation on the part of the Sikh troops, I do not think that the expectations of Captains Mackeson and Lawrence are

quite reasonable, or the almost indefinite extent of proposed reward judicious, or the direct negotiation with the Jummoo Rajahs for their immediate aggrandisement honourable. . . . It would not be compatible with the friendship long subsisting between the British Government and the Lahore Government, now to assign suddenly and directly to the Jummoo Rajahs any territories as a compensation for services demanded of the Sikh Durbar. This would be precipitating the decline of a power which it may be soon expedient to prop, both against Afghans and Jummobees." — [*MS. Records.*] But though Mr. Clerk thought, at this time, that it would not be honourable openly to treat with the Jummoo Rajahs for the transfer of Jellalabad, he was not unwilling to place it permanently in their hands by a stroke of *finesse*. I confess that I cannot see very distinctly how the course suggested by Mr. Clerk is so much more "honourable," and "compatible with friendship," than that suggested by Captains Mackeson and Lawrence.

which Runjeet Singh had coveted, and which the Tripartite treaty had snatched from him, "would not do better."*

In the mean while, it appeared to Mr. Clerk that his presence at the Court of the Sikh ruler, would have the effect of cementing the alliance between the two states, and enable him the better to obtain from the Lahore Government the military assistance that was so greatly needed. He had never doubted the good faith of the Maharajah himself. Whatever selfish motives he may have attributed to him, it was not to be doubted that at this time his feeling and his conduct alike were those of a friend. Clerk declared that no native state had ever taken such great pains to accelerate the movement of our troops by preventing plunder, supplying boats at the ferries, and furnishing food for the use of our army. He had given us the best aid and the best advice, and in the opinion of the British agent was willing to act up to the spirit of the Tripartite treaty. He was, indeed, the only man in the Punjaub who really desired our success.

On the 2nd of March, Clerk, arrived at Umritsur, resolute to "get what he could out of the Sikhs."† Early on the following morning he waited on Shere Singh. The first visit was a visit of condolence on the deaths of Kurruck Singh and his son. The attendance

* "Lawrence is making out a digest of our conversation with the Rajah yesterday. I should say that not even with Sultan Mahomed Khan would the Sikhs hold Jellalabad with any advantage to themselves. If we would bribe them with offers of territory, it must be in some other direction. Would Shikarpoor do better?" — [*MacKenzie to Clerk: Feb. 21, 1842. M.S. Records.*]

† "My course, I think, is clear—to get what I can out of the Sikhs,

and, if to my mind that is anything like substantial co-operation in advancing or even securing support in the rear to accept it for General Pollock if he will use it, and officially to recommend to him that if it proves serviceable he should, contrary to the orders of government, continue to maintain Jellalabad, whilst awaiting further orders from government on the subject." — [*Mr. Clerk to Mr. Robertson: Umritsur, March 4, 1842.*]

at the Durbar was small. No troops were in waiting beyond a single wing of a battalion drawn up to salute the arrival and departure of the British Mission. The Court were in mourning of white. Everything about the Durbar was quiet and subdued. It was a meeting of condolence on both sides. Clerk's expressions of regret were reciprocated by those which the Sikh ruler freely uttered with reference to the death of Sir William Macnaghten. Dhyān Singh and the Fakir Azizooddeen were both loud in their praises of the envoy; and expressed a lively hope that the treacherous Afghans would be duly punished for their offences. After other complimentary interchanges, the Mission departed; and on the following morning proceeded to pay a visit of congratulation to the new ruler. The Court now wore a different aspect. Along the garden-walks stretched walls of crimson broad-cloth, and lines of armed Goorcherrahs, in new appointments, glittered along the paths. Everything was bright and joyous. The courtiers shone in splendid apparel. The Maharajah himself was bright with jewels, of which the *Koh-i-noor* was the lustrous chief. The young Rajah Heera Singh, old Runjeet's minion, radiant with emeralds and pearls, sate beside Shere Singh, whilst his father, the minister, stood behind the regal chair. The officers of the British Mission sate on a row of chairs opposite; and the old Fakir Azizooddeen was seated on the floor beside the chair of the British chief. The conversation was of a general and complimentary character. The *Khelat* of accession was presented to the new ruler; the fidelity of the Sikh Government and the character of its administration were belauded; and then the Mission took its departure.

On the 5th, Clerk, having intimated his desire to wait on the Maharajah, to discuss matters of business, was invited to attend at his own time. He went in the after-

noon; and at once solicited the honour of a private audience. Heera Singh was sitting beside him, and other courtiers were in attendance. A motion of the hand dismissed them all; and Clerk was invited to seat himself in Heera Singh's chair. But the British minister, not wishing that the conversation should be carried on without any witnesses, suggested the recall of Dhyān Singh and the Fakir, who, with Heera Singh and one or two others, were present at the interview. Clerk had a difficult game to play at this time. He had to obtain the most effectual co-operation of the Sikh Government that could be elicited in this hour of trial; and yet he was unwilling to lay bare to the Sikh Durbar the real designs of his own government. He had been directed to disclose those designs to the Sikhs—to intimate that it was the intention of the British government, after rescuing the Jellalabad garrison, to withdraw the army to the British frontier; but inwardly indignant at the feebleness of the policy which was favoured at Calcutta, he shrunk from avowing these intentions of withdrawal, and endeavoured rather to elicit the views of the Lahore Cabinet than to expose the designs of his own. But Shere Singh was not inclined to be less cautious than the British envoy. When Clerk asked what he intended to do to rescue Sale's garrison from destruction, the Maharajah replied that the Sikhs were very desirous to aid the British Government, but that the matter called for consideration. Bristling up at the coolness of this reply, Clerk said that the whole question of the alliance between the two states might call for future consideration, but that the present moment, when the safety of a beleaguered garrison was at stake, was no time for consideration. Qualifying then his former remark, the Sikh ruler said that he meant only that the mode of procedure called for consideration, and he

began to talk about the advantage of erecting sungahs and crowning the heights of the Khybur Pass*—to all of which Clerk readily assented. Then Dhyan Singh, who all this time had been sitting silent, with a dejected air and drooping head, now looked up, and with a cheerful countenance began to take part in the conversation. He had before seemed to think that the purport of the discussion was to consign his brother, Gholab Singh, to inevitable destruction; but he now said that he was certain the troops under the command of that chief would willingly co-operate with the British; but that "an iron lock required an iron key." He then abruptly asked why more British troops were not sent?†—and the Fakir Azizooddeen whispered the same question. Clerk could have blurted out an answer to this—but it was one which would have opened the eyes of the Sikh Durbar, more than it was desirable to open them, to the true nature of British policy at this time, and the true character of our rulers. He, therefore, answered in general terms that the British Government were collecting troops; but that, nevertheless, the co-operation of the Sikh Government was much desired; and, whilst he added that an intimation would be sent to General Pollock regarding the manner in which the Durbar recommended the war in the Khybur to be carried on, Shere Singh promised to send the desired instructions to Gholab Singh; and so the conference ended.

True to his word, the Maharajah at once despatched instructions to Gholab Singh to co-operate heartily and steadily with General Pollock and Captain Mackeson; and it is believed that at the same time Dhyan Singh

* This was merely an echo of what Gholab Singh had been recommending by letter to the Maharajah.

† There were more than enough,

the minister said, to beat all Afghanistan on the plains, but it was a different thing to convey supplies through the defiles of the Khybur.

wrote privately to his brother in a similar strain of exhortation and encouragement. But it was plain to Mr. Clerk that both the Sovereign and his minister regarded, with feelings of painful anxiety, the necessity of avoiding an open rupture with the British Government by aiding in the perilous work that lay before the troops posted at Peshawur. Mr. Clerk remained at the Maharajah's Court, which had removed itself from Umritsur to Lahore, and exerted himself to keep up the fidelity of our ally to the right point of effective co-operation. But as time advanced, Shere Singh became more and more uneasy and apprehensive. It appeared to him that a failure in the Khybur Pass would bring down such a weight of unpopularity upon him that his very throne would be jeopardised by the disaster. One day—it was the 4th of April—holding Durbar in the Huzooree-Bagh, Shere Singh appeared ill at ease. Having conversed a little while on general topics, but with an abstracted air, he ordered the intelligence forwarded to him by the Peshawur news-writers to be read to the British envoy; then took him by the hand and led him to another seat in the garden. Alone with the English gentleman, the Sikh ruler opened out his heart to him. He was concerned, he said, to learn that the British authorities at Peshawur were making no progress in their negotiations for the purchase of a safe passage through the Khybur, and were disinclined to accept the offers of the old Barukzye Governor of Peshawur, Sultan Mahomed, who had declared his willingness to “divide, scatter, and make terms with” our enemies. He apprehended that there would be much fighting and much slaughter; and it was only too probable that the Sikh troops at Peshawur, seeing clearly the danger of the movement, and not by any means understanding the advantages that would accrue to them from it, would

refuse to enter the pass. Or if they entered it, it was probable that they would suffer severely at the hands of the Afghans—and in either case, as he had been continually writing to Peshawur to impress upon the officers there the necessity of effective co-operation with the British, the odium would descend upon him, and perhaps cost him his throne. It was easier to listen to all this than to reply to it. Clerk saw as plainly as the Maharajah himself, that as the Sikh troops had always evinced an insuperable repugnance to enter the Khybur Pass, even when the glory of the Khalsa was to be advanced by the movement, and the dominions of the Lahore Government to be extended, it was hardly reasonable to expect them to show greater alacrity in the advancement of the objects of another nation whom they cordially detested, and whose disasters they regarded with secret delight.*

But whilst Shere Singh was thus expressing his misgivings at Lahore, and the British agent was inwardly acknowledging the reasonable character of the Maharajah's doubts, the Sikh troops at Peshawur were settling down into a state of quiet obedience, and making up their minds to penetrate the Khybur Pass. The letters despatched by Shere Singh and his minister to Avitabile and Gholab Singh had not been without their effect. A confidential friend and adviser of the

* "The aversion which the Sikhs have to penetrate the Khybur is not more inconvenient to the British Government than it is alarming to the Maharajah; for their resentment against the government, which has imposed upon them the arduous duty, will be enhanced, should they suffer from the swords of the Afghans. Nor can any thinking person in this Durbar fail to apprehend that by proceeding to invade Afghanistan in support of its ally, whilst deprived by the circumstances of the alliance of all latitude of securing parties among the Afghans, such as it would create and turn to advantage in aid of its encroachments, if acting on its own account, it may be raising a hornet's nest which may involve the Khalsa in long wars for the preservation of its territories on the Indus." —[*Mr. George Clerk to Government: Lahore, April 5, 1842. MS. Records.*]

Sikh ruler — Boodh Singh—had arrived at Peshawur, charged with messages from the King and the minister, which were supposed to have had an effect upon the Jummoo Rajah, sudden and great. Lawrence, too, had been busy in the Sikh camp, and little anticipating the circumstances under which it was decreed that they should one day meet in that lovely province of the old Douranee Empire over which the Jummoo Rajah now exercises undisputed dominion, had been holding long conferences with Gholab Singh. The good tact, good temper, and quiet firmness of General Pollock, had been exercised with the best results, and the arrival of further reinforcements of European troops had done much to give new confidence to the Khalsa. And so it happened, that when General Pollock prepared to enter the Khybur Pass, the Sikh troops had resolved not to suffer their faces to be blackened before all India; and really, when the hour for exertion came, did more for the honour of their own arms and the support of the British Government than the most sanguine of our officers had ventured to expect.

The dragoons and the horse artillery reached Peshawur on the 29th of March, and Pollock at once made his preparations to enter the Khybur Pass. On the 31st he pitched his camp at Jumrood, in the expectation of advancing on the following morning; but new elements of delay arose. The camel-drivers were deserting. Gholab Singh had not moved up his camp. And, above all, the rain was descending in floods. It would have dispirited the troops to have moved them forward at such a time, and rendered more difficult the advance of the baggage. Pollock had done his best to diminish to the least possible amount the number of carriage-cattle that were to move with him into the Khybur Pass. But an Indian commander has no more

difficult duty than this. Under no circumstances is the general addition to much baggage very easily overcome. Men are not readily persuaded to leave their comforts behind them. A fine soldierly appeal was issued to the army;* and men of all ranks felt that it came from an officer who was not less ready to make sacrifices himself than to call upon others to make them.† But when the force moved, it was compulsory upon it to move lightly. The camel-drivers had deserted in such numbers, that there was not even sufficient carriage for the ammunition. The 33rd Regiment, which had just arrived at Peshawur, could not come up to the encamping-ground for want of cattle; and another day's halt was the result of the delay.‡ In the mean while, the

* After alluding to the defence of Jellalabad, and the probability that the Peshawur force would immediately advance to its relief, General Pollock said: "Success in relieving these troops will raise for this force the admiration and gratitude of all India, and the Major-General commanding feels assured that officers and men will cheerfully make any sacrifices to attain so noble an object. He therefore now calls upon the Brigadiers to assemble the commanding officers under their orders, and determine on the least quantity of baggage and the smallest number of camp-followers with which their regiments can advance. The success of this enterprise will greatly depend upon the quantity of baggage taken, as from the nature of the country between Peshawur and Jellalabad, the line most consistent with safety must be as little encumbered as possible. The Major-General commanding trusts that the confidence he feels in the troops will be repaid by their confidence in him. The soldiers may rest assured that his thoughts are constantly engaged in ensuring their provisions and securing their comforts, and they may be convinced they will

never be called upon by him to make useless sacrifices, or to undergo unnecessary hardships. Arrangements will be made for placing such baggage as may be left behind, in perfect security at Peshawur."

† He had reduced his own baggage-cattle to one camel and two mules.

‡ "My detention here has been most annoying. We have had heavy rain, and the Sikhs begged that I would wait till to-morrow. I have consented to this, because the troops of both powers advancing simultaneously for the same purpose ought to produce a good effect. I should have been better pleased had Mahomed Akbar not sent the last reinforcement—save the guns, which I hope we shall be able to give a good account of. The pluck of the Sepoys is doubtful; but I hope when we carry the mouth of the pass, they will feel confidence. The 9th are most anxious to be let loose, and—please God! by to-morrow, we shall be well into the pass . . . I still much regret that I have not the 31st; but after Sir Robert Sale's letter received some time back, I consider that he has put it out of my power to wait

Sepoys were deserting from Wild's brigade; and no satisfactory progress was making in the negotiations which Mackeson had been carrying on for the purchase of a free passage through the Khybur from the Afreed Maliks.* But there was one advantage in the delay. It gave time for the Sikh troops to prepare themselves, after their own fashion, to co-operate with our army, and General Pollock felt that whatever might be the amount of active assistance to be derived from the efforts of our allies, a combined movement would have a good moral effect.

Early on the morning of the 5th of April, General Pollock struck his camp, and began to move upon Ali Musjid.

Before leaving their encamping-ground at Kawulsur, and marching to Jumrood, the order of march had been laid down, and had been well studied by commanding officers. Brigadier Wild was to command the advance guard, and General M'Caskill the rear. At the head of the column were to march the grenadier company of the 9th Queen's Regiment, one company of the 26th Native Infantry, three companies of the 30th Native

longer, although I am quite sure that the addition of 900 Europeans would have operated very favorably for the prisoners. I, however, hope that you will be able, through the Ghilzyes, to pave the way for their release when we reach you."—[*General Pollock to Captain Macgregor: Jumrood, April 3, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

* The negotiations, indeed, failed altogether. The chiefs had given hostages, and were to have received 50,000 rupees, for the safe conduct of the force from Jumrood to Dhaka—one moiety to be paid in advance, and the other on the army reaching the latter place. "They were to clear the pass for us to Dhaka, and make arrangements for guarding it afterwards. They engaged to re-

move all hostile Afreedis from the pass, as far as Ali-Musjid, and then we were to repel any troops of Mahomed Akbar Khan sent to oppose us."—[*Captain Mackeson to General Pollock: April 2, 1842. MS. Records.*] Mackeson adds: "Yesterday the Afreedis in our pay proposed to seize on the mouth of the pass; but as the Sikhs were not ready to move on, and they promised to be ready on the following day, the movement was postponed. To-day the Afreedis of our party have pleaded that Mahomed Akbar's troops have come down to the mouth of the pass, and that they can no longer perform their agreement. They offer to return the money that has been given to them."

—[*MS. Records.*]

Infantry, and two companies of the 33rd Native Infantry, under Major Barnewell, of the 9th. Then were to follow the Sappers and Miners, nine pieces of artillery,* and two squadrons of the 3rd Dragoons. After these, the camels, laden with all the treasure of the force and a large portion of the ammunition, were to move on, followed by a squadron of the 1st Native Cavalry. Then the Commissariat stores, protected by two companies of the 53rd Native Infantry, were to advance, and a squadron of the 1st Cavalry were to follow. Then the baggage and camp-followers, covered by a Ressalah of Irregular Horse, and a squadron of the 1st Native Cavalry, were to move forward, with a further supply of ammunition, and litters, and camel-panniers for the sick.

The rear-guard was to consist of three foot-artillery guns—the 10th Light Cavalry—two Ressalahs of Irregular Horse—two squadrons of the 3rd Dragoons—two horse-artillery guns—three companies of the 60th Native Infantry; one company of the 6th Native Infantry; and one company of her Majesty's 9th Foot.

These details formed the centre column which was to make its way through the pass. Two other columns, composed entirely of infantry, were told off into parties, and instructed to crown the heights on either side of the pass. Two companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, four companies of the 26th Native Infantry, with 400 jezail-chees, were placed under the command of Colonel Taylor, of the 9th Foot; seven companies of the 30th Native Infantry, under Major Payne; three companies of the 60th Native Infantry, under Captain Riddle; four companies of the 64th Native Infantry, under Major Anderson, with some details of Broadfoot's sappers, and a company and a half of her Majesty's 9th Foot; the

* Four horse-artillery guns, two guns of the mountain-train, and three foot-artillery guns.

party being commanded by Major Davis, of the 9th, made up the right crowning column.

The left crowning column was to consist of two companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, four companies of the 26th Native Infantry, and 200 jezailchees, under Major Huish, of the 26th Native Infantry; seven companies of the 53rd Native Infantry, under Major Hoggan, of that corps; three companies of the 60th Native Infantry, under Captain Napleton, of that regiment; and four and a half companies of the 64th Native Infantry, and one and a half companies of her Majesty's 9th Foot, under Colonel Moseley, of the 64th. With these last were to go some auxiliaries, supplied by Torabaz Khan, the loyal chief of Lalpoorah. The flanking parties were to advance in successive detachments of two companies, at intervals of 500 yards.

After thus describing the order of the march, the following rules were laid down for the guidance of commanding officers:

2. A bugler or trumpeter to be attached to each commanding-officer of a party or detachment of the several columns.

3. Whenever an obstacle presents itself, or accident occurs, of a nature to impede the march of any part of either of the columns, and occasions a break in its continuity, the officer in command nearest to the spot will order the halt to be sounded, which will be immediately repeated by the other buglers, and the whole will halt till the removal of the difficulty enables the columns to proceed in their established order, when the signal to advance will be given.

4. The baggage-master will superintend the placing of the baggage, &c., in the order prescribed, and the Major-General commanding requests that commanding officers will use their best exertions to facilitate this important object. The quarter-master of each corps will see that the baggage of his regiment is placed in its proper position in the column, and an officer from each is to be appointed to the duty.

5. No private guards are to be allowed. The parties of cavalry

and infantry, allotted at intervals in the line of march, are to be the only troops attending it.

6. The officers entrusted with the command of the parties which are to flank the rear-guard on the heights, must give their most vigilant attention to the important duty of preventing their men from hurrying in advance of it; its rear must never be left exposed to fire from the heights.

7. The troops to be told off on their regimental parades, as above detailed, and marched at the appointed hour to their respective posts.

8. The force will march to Jumrood to-morrow morning, in the order above prescribed. The general to beat at four, and the assembly at five o'clock.

9. The baggage and camp-followers of each corps are to be kept with their respective regiments till notice is given by the baggage-master that they are required to take their places in the column.*

These orders had been issued before the force marched to Jumrood. On the 4th of April, whilst the troops were encamped at that place, Pollock issued further and more specific orders to regulate the movements of the following morning:

Camp Jumrood, 4th April, 1842.

The force to be under arms to-morrow morning at half-past three o'clock, ready to move forward, at which time all the treasure, ammunition, baggage, &c., will be moved to the low ground to the right front of the hills now occupied by picquets. No fires are to be lighted on any account; no drums to beat, or bugles to be sounded. The six companies of the 60th Regiment, and six companies of the 33rd Regiment, will remain with the baggage in the vicinity of the treasure and ammunition. The parties for crowning the heights, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor and Major Anderson, will move forward to the hill on the right of the pass. The parties for the same duty, under the command of Major Huish and Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley, will in like manner move forward to the hill on the left.

* *MS. Records.*

Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor's party will be accompanied by the Irregulars who lately garrisoned Ali-Musjid.

Captain Ferris's jezailchees will accompany the left advancing party.

When the heights have been crowned on both hills, four companies of the 9th Foot, the eight companies of the 26th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor and Major Huish, also the jezailchees, under Captain Ferris, will descend the hills to be in readiness to enter the pass.

Six horse-artillery guns, four from the foot-artillery, with the two mountain guns, will be drawn up in battery opposite the pass.

The advance guard, seven companies of the 30th, and seven companies of the 53rd, will accompany the guns.

The whole of the cavalry will be so placed by Brigadier White, that any attempt at an attack from the low hills on the right may be frustrated. When the baggage, &c., is directed to advance, the same order of march will be preserved as was formerly prescribed, with the following alteration: Six companies of the 60th N.I. will be together on the right, and six companies of the 33rd, now arrived, will follow the 53rd N.I. When the rear of the column is entering the pass, the two rear companies of Lieutenant-Colonel Moseley's and Major Anderson's parties should descend the hills.

G. PONSONBY, Capt., A. A. General.*

That evening the General went round to all his commanding officers to ascertain that they thoroughly understood the orders that had been issued for their guidance; and to learn from them what was the temper of their men. There did not seem to be much cause for inquietude on this score. The *morale* of the Sepoys had greatly improved.

At three o'clock on the morning of the 5th of April the army commenced its march. It moved off in the dim twilight, without beat of drum or sound of bugle. Quietly the crowning columns prepared to ascend. The heights on either side were covered with the enemy, but

* *MS. Records.*

so little was the mode of attack which the British General had determined upon expected by the enemy, that it was not until our flankers had achieved a considerable ascent that the Khyburees were aware of their advance. Then, as the morning dawned, the position of the two forces were clearly revealed to each other; and the struggle commenced.

Across the mouth of the pass the enemy had thrown a formidable barrier. It was made of mud, and huge up stones, and heavy branches of trees. The Khyburees had not wanted time to mature their defensive operations; and they had thrown up a barricade of considerable strength. It was not a work upon which our guns could play with any good effect; but there was little account to be made of the barrier when once our light infantry had swept the hills. And that work was soon going on gallantly and successfully on both sides, whilst the centre column, drawn up in battle array, was waiting the issue of the contest. Nothing could have proved better than the arrangements of the General; and no general could have wished his plan of attack to be carried out with better effect. On the left, the crowning column was soon in vigorous and successful action. On the right, the precipitous nature of the ground was such that it seemed to defy the eager activity of Taylor and his men. But he stole round the base of the mountain unseen, and found a more practicable ascent than that which he had first tried. Then on both sides the British infantry were soon hotly engaged with the mountaineers, clambering up the precipitous peaks, and pouring down a hot and destructive fire upon the surprised and disconcerted Khyburees. They had not expected that our disciplined troops, who had, as it were, been looking at the Khybur for some months, would be more than a match for them upon their native hills. But so it was. Our British

infantry were beating them in every direction, and everywhere the white dresses of the Khyburees were seen flying across the hills. The Duke of Wellington had said, some time before, that he "had never heard that our troops were not equal, as well in their personal activity as by their arms, to contend with and overcome any natives of hills whatever."* And now our British infantry and our Bengal Sepoys were showing how well able they were to meet the Khyburees on their native hills. The mountain-rangers, whom Macnaghten wished to raise, because Sale's brigade had been harassed by the Ghilzyes, could not have clambered over the hills with greater activity than our British troops, and would not have been half as steady or half as faithful.

It was now time for Pollock to advance. The centre column did not attempt to move forward until the flankers had fought their way to the rear of the mouth of the pass. But when he had fairly turned the enemy's position, he began to destroy the barrier, and prepared to advance into the pass. The enemy had assembled in large numbers at the mouth, but finding themselves out-flanked—finding that they had to deal with different men and a different system from what they had seen a few months before, they gradually withdrew, and, without opposition, Pollock now cleared his way through the barricade, and pushed into the pass with his long string of baggage. The difficulties of the remainder of the march were now mainly occasioned by the great extent of this convoy. Pollock was conveying both ammunition and provisions to Sale's garrison; and there were many more beasts of burden, therefore, than were used by his own force. But skilfully was the march conducted. Encumbered as he was, the General was

* See Appendix, vol. i.

compelled to move slowly forward. The march to Ali-Musjid occupied the greater part of the day. The heat was intense. The troops suffered greatly from thirst. But they all did their duty well. Whatever doubts may have lingered to the last in Pollock's mind, were now wholly dispersed; and when he reached Ali-Musjid in safety, and had time to think over the events of the day, nothing refreshed him more than the thought that the Sepoys had fairly won back the reputation they had lately lost.*

The enemy had evacuated Ali-Musjid in the morning; and now Ferris's jezailchees were sent in to garrison the place. A part of Pollock's force, with the headquarters, bivouacked near the fortress. The night was bitterly cold; but the command of the heights was maintained, and the men, both Europeans and Natives, who had been under arms since three o'clock in the morning, did not utter a complaint. They appeared to feel that they had done a great work; but that the utmost vigilance was necessary to secure the advantage they had gained. The enemy were still hovering about, and firing upon our people all night long; and it was necessary to be on the alert.

It was a great thing to have accomplished such a march with so little loss of life, and no loss of baggage. Avitabile said that Pollock and his force were going to certain destruction. Had he moved precipitately with his main column into the pass, he would probably have

* "The Sepoys behaved nobly," wrote General Pollock, on the day after the action. "They merely required a trial in which they should find that they were not sacrificed. There were, however, many desertions before we advanced. Now they are in the highest spirits, and have a thorough contempt for the enemy. This is a great point gained. You are aware that Mahomed Akbar sent a party, about 800, with one or two guns, to oppose us; but they thought better of it, and abandoned the fort of Ali-Musjid this morning. I have accordingly taken possession. The Sikhs are encamped near us, and are much more respectful and civil since our operations of yesterday."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

been driven back with great slaughter; but the precaution he took in crowning the heights and turning the enemy's position, secured him, though not without some fighting the whole way, a safe passage. The enemy are said to have lost about 300 men killed, and 600 or 800 wounded.

The Sikh troops moved up by another pass to Ali-Musjid. Pollock, still doubtful of their fidelity, and not desiring to have them too near his own troops, suggested, that when he pushed forward by the Shadec-Bagiaree Pass, they should take the other, known as the Jubogee.* Pollock had entered into a covenant with Gholab Singh for the occupation of the pass by the Sikh troops until the 5th of June. It was necessary that he should keep open his communications with the rear; and the Sikhs undertook to do it. But when Pollock marched to Jellalabad, they began to bargain with certain Afreed chiefs, hostile to our interests, to keep open the pass for the stipulated time, for a certain sum of money, thus making known to the tribes the time for which they had covenanted to hold it.† Early in May the Sikhs suddenly quitted their position at Ali-Musjid and returned to Jumrood, seizing some of our baggage-cattle

* Pollock saw nothing of the Sikhs till the afternoon of the 6th. They doubted his success, and held discreetly back until they found that he had made good his way to Ali-Musjid.

† "I have been given to understand that, on the advance of our army to Jellalabad, the Sikh authorities at Peshawur, without intimating their intentions to Captain Lawrence, and without reference to any engagements between the Afreedis and ourselves, entered into arrangements with the Afreedis to purchase, for the sum of 6000 rupees or 4000 rupees, the security of that portion of the

pass they have engaged to protect for a period of two months. The parties they agreed to pay were Abdul Rahman Khan, Kooki Kheil, Mahomed Jalim Sipa, and Alla Dad Malik, Din Kheil, son of Khan Bahadur, all of whom were at that time hostile to us, although Abdul Rahman Khan has since come over. There could have been no objection to the Sikhs entering into an arrangement with the Afreedis; but it should have been done in communication with us, and without imparting to the Afreedis the term for which the Sikhs were bound to hold the pass."—[*Mackeson to Pollock: May 6, 1842.*]

on the way, throwing their loads on the ground, and employing the animals to carry their baggage.*

In the mean while, Pollock had reached Jellalabad. "We found the fort strong," he wrote to a friend; "the garrison healthy; and, except for wine and beer, better off than we are. They were, of course, delighted to see us. We gave three cheers as we passed the colours; and the band of each regiment played as it came up. It was a sight worth seeing. All appeared happy."† It was, indeed, a happy meeting. Sale's little garrison had been shut up for five months in Jellalabad. They had long been surrounded with perils, lessened only by their own daring. They had looked in vain for succours, until they had become so familiar with danger that they had begun to feel secure in the midst of it. But they were weary of their isolation, and were eager to see their countrymen again. Welcome, therefore, was the arrival of Pollock's force; and happy the day on which it appeared with streaming colours and gay music. But the prospects of the garrison had brightened; and if

* "I regret to have to report that the Sikh regiments posted at Ali-Musjid, yesterday left their post, and returned to Jumrood; on their way throwing the loads off some of our mules and bullocks that they met, and employing the animals to carry their own baggage. My letter to Koonwur Pertab Singh, and his answer, are herewith enclosed. You will observe that the whole Sikh regiment was actually recalled by order, without notice being given to me, or without their being relieved, although four regiments were within a mile of them." —[*Captain Lawrence to Mr. Clerk: May 9, 1849.*]

"I waited on Koonwur Pertab Singh yesterday. I spoke strongly on the outrage of the morning, and on the necessity of a severe example

being made of the offenders. . . . I repeatedly returned to the subject, declaring the necessity of punishing the offenders, whom, I said, there could be no difficulty in recognising, as they were there for hours in the heart of the town, and had been seen by General Avitabile himself, as well as by Captains Lane and Johnstone, and by many of the Commissariat agents. It was not denied that the men could be recognised; but I much fear that no punishment will be inflicted on them." —[*Lawrence to Pollock: May 8, 1849.*]

† Mr. Gleig says that the band of the 13th went out to play them in; and that the relieving force marched the two or three last miles to the tune, "Oh, but ye've been lang o' coming."

Pollock had to speak of his victories; Sale, too, had his to narrate.

Pollock, before he entered the pass, had received intelligence of the gallant sortie made by the garrison on the 1st of April, when they swept away from the covering parties of the enemy a flock of 500 sheep and goats, which had secured them a further ten days' supply of meat.* Writing of this to General Pollock, Macgregor had said: "Our troops of all arms are in the highest pluck, and they seem never so happy as when fighting with the enemy. I verily believe we could capture Mahomed Akbar's camp, even with our present means, were it our game to incur the risk of an attempt of the kind."† This was lightly spoken; a mere outburst of the abundant animal spirits of the writer; but Pollock was scarcely on the other side of Ali-Musjid, when he received tidings which made it clear to him that now the light word had become a grave fact, and the capture of Mahomed Akbar's camp had been actually accomplished.

And now that they had reached Jellalabad, every one in Pollock's camp was eager for details of this great victory. It was, indeed, a dashing exploit. On the 5th of April, Macgregor's spies brought in tidings from Akbar Khan's camp that Pollock had been beaten back, with great slaughter, in the Khybur Pass. On the morning of the 6th, the Sirdar's guns broke out into

* Mr. Gleig says: "On the 2nd, Sir Robert Sale proceeded to distribute the captured sheep among the corps and departments composing his garrison. The 35th declined to accept the boon. They sent a deputation to the General, which respectfully acquainted him that animal food was less necessary for them than for Europeans, and besought him to give their portion of the booty to their gallant

comrades of the 13th. No wonder that between these two corps there should have sprung up a romantic friendship, which, though the accidents of service have parted them, probably for ever, neither is likely to forget, at all events as a tradition, while they keep their places respectively in the armies of the Queen and of the East India Company."

† *MS. Correspondence.*

a royal salute, in honour of the supposed victory. Other reports then came welling in to Jellalabad. It was said that there was another revolution at Caubul, and that the Sirdar was about to break up his camp and hasten to the capital. In either case, it seemed that the time had come to strike a blow at Akbar Khan's army; so a council of war was held, and the question gravely debated. It is said that councils of war "never fight." But the council which now assembled to determine whether the Sirdar's camp should be attacked on the following morning, decided the question in the affirmative. They looked at it in all its bearings, and then determined that at daybreak they would go out and fight, "in the hope of relieving the place from blockade, and facilitating Pollock's advance to their succour."

Sale issued directions for the formation of three columns of infantry, the centre consisting of her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry, mustering 500 bayonets, under Colonel Dennie; the left one, under Lieutenant-Colonel Monteith, C.B.; and the right, composed of one company of the 13th Light Infantry and one of the 35th Native Infantry, and the detachment of Sappers, under Lieutenant Orr (the severity of Captain Broadfoot's wound still rendering him non-effective), the whole amounting to 360 men, commanded by Captain Havelock, of her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry. These were to be supported by the fire of the guns of No. 6, Light Field Battery, under Captain Abbott, to which Captain Backhouse, of Shah Soojah's Artillery, was attached, and by the whole of my small cavalry force under Captain Oldfield and Lieutenant Mayne.* Such were the components of the little force that was to attack the camp of the Sirdar.

At daybreak they moved out of the fort. Akbar

* *General Sale's Public Despatch.*

Khan was ready to receive them. He had drawn out his troops before the camp, with his right resting on a fort, and his left on the Caubul river. He had not less than 6000 men. Havelock commenced the fight by an attack on the enemy's left; whilst Dennie, with the centre column, moved against a fort which was vigorously defended by the enemy. Gallantly, at the head of his men, advanced Dennie to the attack—a brave and chivalrous soldier ever in the advance—but an Afghan marksman covered him with his piece, and the ball passed through Dennie's body.* A better soldier never fell on the field of battle.† The victory was dearly purchased by the death of such a man. And yet it was a brilliant one. Sale gave his orders for a general attack on the Sirdar's camp; and his orders were carried into effect with an impetuosity and success worthy of the defenders of Jellalabad. In the forcible language of Sale's despatch, on which I cannot improve,

* Mr. Gleig gives the following account of Dennie's end: "With undaunted resolution the 13th rushed at the fort, Colonel Dennie nobly leading; and finding the aperture sufficiently large to admit of it, they rushed through the outer wall—only to find themselves exposed to a murderous fire from the untouched defences of the inner keep. Here Dennie received, just as he approached the breach, his mortal wound. A ball entered the side, passing through the sword-belt; and he bent forward upon his horse. Lieutenant and Adjutant (now Captain) Wood instantly rode up to him, and expressed a hope that the hurt was not serious. But it was more than serious; it was fatal. A couple of orderlies, by Captain Wood's direction, turned his horse's head homewards, and leading it by the bridle, endeavoured to guide him to the town. But he never reached it alive. He died with the sound of

battle in his ears, hoping, but not living to be assured, that it would end triumphantly."

† I rejoice in the opportunity thus afforded me of laying on Dennie's grave my humble tribute of praise; the more so, that, when living, I incurred his anger by the freedom of my remarks on some moot points connected with his military career. Dennie's services were not duly recognised or adequately rewarded. He was a man of strong feeling, and he expressed himself strongly; and some friends, not wisely regardful of his memory, published, under his name, some hasty letters, more than one of the dashes or asterisks in which point to the writer of these volumes. I do not now mind saying that I think it very probable that I was wrong. But Dennie was equally wrong when he attributed what I wrote to feelings of personal animosity.

"The artillery advanced at the gallop, and directed a heavy fire upon the Afghan centre, whilst two of the columns of infantry penetrated the line near the same point, and the third forced back its left from its support on the river, into the stream of which some of his horse and foot were driven. The Afghans made repeated attempts to check our advance by a smart fire of musketry, by throwing forward heavy bodies of horse, which twice threatened the detachments of foot under Captain Havelock, and by opening upon us three guns from a battery screened by a garden wall, and said to have been served under the personal superintendence of the Sirdar. But in a short time they were dislodged from every point of their position, their cannon taken, and their camp involved in a general conflagration. The battle was over—and the enemy in full retreat in the direction of Lughman by about 7 A.M. We have made ourselves masters of two cavalry standards, recaptured four guns lost by the Caubul and Gundamuck forces, the restoration of which, to our government, is matter of much honest exultation among our troops, seized and destroyed a great quantity of material and ordnance stores, and burnt the whole of the enemy's tents. In short, the defeat of Mahomed Akbar in open field, by the troops whom he had boasted of blockading, has been complete, and signal." The enemy's loss was severe. "The field of battle was strewed with the bodies of men and horses, and the richness of the trappings of some of the latter seemed to attest that persons of distinction had been among the casualties. The loss on our side was small. Eight privates of the 13th Native Infantry, and two of the 35th Native Infantry, were killed. Three officers and about fifty men were wounded.

Great was the joy which the intelligence of the victories of Pollock and Sale diffused throughout all India; and in no one breast did so much of gladness bubble up as in that of Lord Ellenborough. He wrote, that although it was his misfortune not to be a soldier by profession, he knew how to appreciate soldierly qualities and soldierly acts. It was then that, being at Benares at the time, he issued that well-known notification which conferred on Sale's brigade the honourable title by which it has since been so well-known—the title of the "Illustrious Garrison."

Secret Department, Benares, 21st April.

The Governor-General feels assured that every subject of the British Government will peruse with the deepest interest and satisfaction the report he now communicates of the entire defeat of the Afghan troops, under Mahomed Akbar Khan, by the garrison of Jellalabad.

That illustrious garrison, which, by its constancy in enduring privation, and by its valour in action, has already obtained for itself the sympathy and respect of every true soldier, has now, sallying forth from its walls, under the command of its gallant leader, Major-General Sir Robert Sale, thoroughly beaten in open field an enemy of more than three times its numbers, taken the standards of their boasted cavalry, destroyed their camp, and recaptured four guns, which, under circumstances which can never again occur, had during the last winter fallen into their hands.

The Governor-General cordially congratulates the army upon the return of victory to its ranks. He is convinced that there, as in all former times, it will be found, while, as at Jellalabad, the European and Native troops mutually supporting each other, and evincing equal discipline and valour, are led into action by officers in whom they justly confide.

The Governor-General directs that the substance of this notification, and of Major-General Sir Robert Sale's report, be carefully made known to all troops, and that a salute of twenty-one guns be fired at every principal station of the army.

The "Illustrious Garrison" had now become history. Sale ceased to command at Jellalabad; and soon letters from Lord Ellenborough set aside the political functions of Macgregor. In Pollock and Nott, on either side of Afghanistan, had been vested supreme political authority; and Macgregor soon took his place beside the General, simply as his *aide-de-camp*. By Pollock's side, too, holding the office of his military secretary, was Shakespear, who had done such good service in liberating the Russian slaves at Khiva, and who had won his spurs by this Central-Asian exploit, and returned to India Sir Richmond Shakespear. Pollock knew the worth of these men, and turned their experience to account. But the reign of the "Politicals" was at an end. Lord Ellenborough had determined to dethrone them.

The Governor-General knew his men. He did well in trusting Pollock and Nott. But after the melancholy illustration of the trustworthiness of military officers of high rank displayed the conduct of affairs at Caubul, the time hardly seemed a happy one for opening out the question of political and military responsibilities, and their relative effects upon the interests of the state. It is right, however, now that it has been stated how the whole system exercised so great an influence over events in Afghanistan, was abolished by the Governor-General, that something should be said upon the general character of the diplomatic functionaries employed on the great field of Central Asia.

There is no single controversial topic which has eliminated so many sparks of bad feeling—so much personality, so much bitter invective, and I fear it must be added, so much reckless mendacity, as this question of political agency. At one time a "Political" was, by many writers, considered fair game. To hunt him

down with all conceivable calumny and vituperation, was regarded as a laudable achievement. Every one had a stone to throw at him—every one howled at him with execration, or shouted at him in derision. Temperate men on this topic, became intemperate; charitable men, uncharitable; sagacity ceased to be sagacious; discrimination ceased to discriminate. All alike lifted up their voices to swell the chorus of popular indignation.

The Caubul outburst, with its attendant horrors, filled this cup of bitter feeling to the brim. It would be difficult to embody, in a page of mere description, the popular notion of an Afghan "Political." He was believed to be a very conceited, a very arrogant, a very ignorant, and a very unfeeling personage; a pretender, who, on the strength of a little smattering of Persian and some interest, perhaps petticoat interest, in high places, had obtained an appointment, the duties of which he was not capable of performing, and the trust involved in which he was well-nigh certain to abuse. He was looked upon as a creature whose blunders were as mischievous as his pretensions were ridiculous; one, whose ideas of diplomacy were limited to the cultivation of a moustache and the faculty of sitting cross-legged on the ground; who talked largely about Durbar, rode out with a number of Sowars at his heels; and was always on the point of putting salt upon the tail of some fugitive chief, and never achieving it after all. But this was only the more favorable aspect of the picture. There was another and a darker side. He was sometimes represented as a roaring lion, going about seeking whom he should devour; unveiling Afghan ladies and pulling Afghan gentlemen by the beard; inviting chiefs to a conference and then betraying them; blowing Sirdars from guns; conniving at wholesale massacre; bribing brothers to betray brothers, fathers their sons;

keeping fierce dogs to hound them at innocent countrymen; desecrating mosques, insulting Moollahs, trampling on the Koran—in a word, committing every conceivable outrage that cruelty and lust could devise. There was no amount of baseness, indeed, of which these men were not supposed to be capable; no licentiousness to which they were not addicted; no crimes which they did not commit. This was the popular notion of an "Afghan Political." It was constantly illustrated in oral conversation and in the local literature of the day. Men talked and wrote upon the subject as though the question—if ever question there were—had long ago been settled by common consent; and it was not until the war had been brought to a close, that a doubt was raised respecting the validity of the charges so generally brought against the Ishmaels of diplomacy in the East.

Very much of this is now mere exploded slander. I cannot say that the political officers, who distinguished themselves throughout the Afghanistan campaign, have *lived down* the calumny of which they were the victims. Very few of the number survive. But a reaction, in public opinion, has commenced; and there is discernible a growing disposition to do justice, at least to the memories of the dead. Men speak and write more temperately on the subject. Exaggeration no longer overstrides all our utterances on this topic; and, in some cases, full justice has been done to the noble qualities of head and heart which have adorned, perhaps do adorn men amongst us, under the great "Political" reproach.

It would serve no good purpose to run from one extreme into the other. It is the evil of sudden reactions of popular feeling, that men escape from one error only to be precipitated into another of an opposite class. The system of political agency is not one of unmingled good; nor are political agents exempt from the

common frailties of humanity. Many mistakes were unquestionably committed; sometimes a stronger word might without exaggeration have been applied to the things that were done in Afghanistan by our diplomatic agents. Diplomacy is, at all times, a dangerous game. It has seldom, if ever, been played in any part of the world, without some loss of purity, some departure from integrity. In Europe, the diplomatist treads a tortuous path. Guile is met with guile. Fraud is often counteracted by fraud. Minister overreaches minister. One state jockeys another. And, in the affairs of nations, arts are resorted to which, in the concerns of private life, would stamp the wily plotter with infamy not to be escaped. But, in the East, in the midst of the worst contagion, tempted on every side, stimulated by the fear of failure, irritated by the duplicity of others, far greater is the difficulty of preserving intact the diplomatic integrity which is exposed to so many corrupting influences. I am not asserting the propriety of fighting all men with their own weapons. I have no faith whatever in the worldly wisdom apart from all considerations of right and wrong, of playing off wile against wile—meeting treachery with treachery—lie with lie. Such tactics may succeed for a season; but, in the long run, truth and honesty will be found the most effective weapons. All I desire to plead in behalf of our Oriental diplomatists is the extraordinary temptations to which they have been exposed. Many of them were necessarily without experience in the difficult game; and, therefore, apprehensive of failure—little confident in themselves, when called upon to encounter, perhaps for the first time, the deep duplicity of Eastern intrigue. Fearful of being drawn into a snare, and deeply impressed with a sense of the responsibilities resting upon them, they have sometimes, in their eager-

ness to bring negotiations to a successful issue, departed from that strict line of integrity, which we could wish our countrymen ever to maintain. This much at least must be admitted—but who has ever gained a reputation as a skilful diplomatist without some deviation from the straight path of open and truthful manliness of conduct?

Among the bitterest assailants of the political system was General Nott. In the summer of 1841, he wrote:

When we arrived here, the natives had an idea that an Englishman's word, once given, was *sacred*, never to be broken. That beautiful charm is gone, and every pledge and every guarantee trampled under foot. The day of retribution and deep revenge *will come*. *Come*, did I say?—it is in some measure here—already the sword is sharpened, and the wild Afghan song echoes upon the mountains and in the villages—the forerunner of massacre and blood. I like these people, and would trust myself alone in their wildest mountains. When I was in Ghilzye, they soon found out who protected them from plunder and oppression, and who did not. My tent was always crowded with these people, begging to do *something*—asking *what* I wanted—that they were ready to do whatever I ordered them; yet not a man could be prevailed upon to go near the Prince or the political agent; and when a few workpeople were required for a public purpose, not one could be had. A chief came to my tent and boldly said: “After the cruel treatment we experienced before you arrived here, how can it be expected that the people will assist in building barracks? You have been just to us; say what you want for your own comfort, and we will fly to perform it.” If a man is too stupid or too lazy to drill his company, he often turns sycophant, cringes to the heads of departments, and is often made a Political, and of course puts the government to an enormous expense, and disgraces the character of his country; this has been the scene before my eyes many times since I left Hindostan. The troops I sent out to-day will put the government to a great expense, and the poor officers and men will have the thermometer at one hundred and eight

degrees in *their tents*, and, if exposed to the *sun*, one hundred and twenty and one hundred and thirty degrees, and all because a foolish Political destroyed a small village containing *twenty-three* inhabitants. And why, think you? Because he *thought*—*thought, mind you*—he *thought* that they looked insultingly at him, as he passed with his two hundred cavalry as an escort! Had I been on the spot, he would have had eight troopers for his protection; he would have *then* been civil to the inhabitants, or perhaps not cruel. Fancy a young Political, with two hundred troopers at his heels—why, I am in the habit of riding eight or ten miles into the country, often without a single orderly, or even my syce [groom]; I enter their gardens and their villages, and meet with nothing but civility. Again, I say, that I am ashamed of my countrymen, and I prefer the much-abused Beluchi. This very morning, on the march, I heard two Englishmen, calling themselves honourable men and gentlemen, declaring that they thought every native of the country should have his throat cut! And why? Because these poor, wretched people sometimes shoot our people in defence of their *wives, children*, and property.*

That there was some mismanagement in Western Afghanistan I have shown. But I protest against the bitterness poured out upon the general body of diplomatic *employés* in Afghanistan—the taunting insinuation that being incapable of making good soldiers they became parasites and “Politicals.” “If a man is too stupid or too lazy to drill his company,” wrote General Nott, “he often turns sycophant, cringes to the heads of departments, and is made a ‘Political,’ and of course puts the government to an enormous expense, and disgraces the character of his country.” Nothing was ever more unlike the truth. The Afghan “Politicals” were among the best soldiers in the country. Many of them, as Todd, Rawlinson, Nicolson, &c., were practised drill-instructors—had shown an especial fitness for this particular duty in disciplining foreign troops or raw levies. And no

* Correspondence of General Nott, quoted in the *Quarterly Review*.

one, who takes account of the most honourable incidents of the Afghan War, will overlook the military services rendered by Pottinger, Macgregor, H. M. Lawrence, Mackeson, Broadfoot, Outram, and others, who are known to us as Political Agents. There are no finer soldiers in the Indian Army than many of those who distinguished themselves during the war in Afghanistan, under the unpopular designation of "Politicals."

BOOK VII.

[1842.]

CHAPTER I.

[January—April: 1842.]

The Last Days of Shah Soojah—State of Parties at Caubul—Condition of the Hostages—the Nawab Zemaun Khan—Letters of Shah Soojah—His Death—Question of his Fidelity—His Character and Conduct considered.

It is time that I should pause in the narration of the retributory measures of the British-Indian Government; to dwell, for a little space, upon the events at Caubul which succeeded the departure of Elphinstone's army. It had been rumoured throughout India—and the rumour had created no little astonishment in the minds of those who had believed that the Caubul insurrection was a movement against the Feringhees and their King—that ever since the departure of the former Shah Soojah had continued to occupy the Balla Hissar, and had been recognised as the supreme authority by the very men who had recently been in arms against him. And the rumour was a perfect echo of the truth. Ever since the departure of the British army Shah Soojah had reigned at Caubul.

He had reigned at Caubul, but he had not ruled. His power was merely nominal. The chiefs wanted a pup-

pet; and in the unhappy Shah they found the only one who was ever likely to stand between them and the vengeance of the British nation. Day after day they made their salaam to him in the Balla Hissar; but so imperfect even was their outward recognition of his regal dignity, that money was still coined in the name of the Newab Zemaun Khan. The Newab, who had been raised to the sovereignty by the voice of the chiefs soon after the first outbreak of the insurrection, had cheerfully resigned the honour that had been thrust upon him, and accepted the office of Wuzer. Amcen-oollah Khan was appointed Naib, or deputy. For a little time there was some outward show of harmony; but there was no real union between the King and the chiefs. The Barukzyes spoke scornfully of the King; and the King could not refrain from expressing his mistrust of the whole tribe of Barukzyes. Amcen-oollah Khan, openly swearing allegiance to both, seems to have held the balance between the two opposing factions, and was in reality the most influential man in the state. He had amassed, by fraud and violence, large sums of money, which the other chiefs, straitened as they were by an empty treasury, and unable to carry out any great national measure, would fain have made him disgorge. From the Shah himself they contrived to extort some three or four lakhs of rupees; but when Akbar Khan wrote pressing letters to Caubul for guns and ammunition, that he might lay siege to Jellalabad, no one would move without pay, and money was not forthcoming for the purpose.

All parties were jealous of each other; and especially jealous of the rising power of Akbar Khan. The young Barukzye was in Lughman; and the elder chiefs at Caubul, even if they had possessed the money to enable them to answer these emergent indents upon their military resources, would have been little inclined to

send him the reinforcements and munitions for which he was continually writing. They talked about raising an army of their own, and opposing the retributory march of the British through the Khybur Pass; but the want of money presented an insuperable obstacle to any military movement on a scale that would afford a prospect of success. The Shah himself talked openly in Durbar about standing forward as defender of the faith, and declaring a religious war against the Kaffirs; but he privately assured Conolly that he was heart and soul with the British, and he wrote long letters to the Governor-General, Clerk, Macgregor, and others, declaring his inviolable fidelity, and eagerly clamouring for money.*

* The letters of John Conolly written at this time afford a sufficiently clear insight into the state of parties at Caubul. On the 17th of January he wrote to Macgregor: "The accounts of our most ill-fated force become more distressing every day. Hundreds of Sepoys, wounded, frostbitten, starving, and naked, come into the city. The Oosbegs buy many, and some find their way to us, and are relieved in the hospital, which is now crowded to excess; and the poor wretches are dying off fast. That villain, Ameen-oollah, is evidently anxious that the sick should die, for he will not assist them in any way, nor attend in the least to our repeated requests for assistance. The Newab is so completely in the hands of the Naib that he cannot afford us any relief. The Afghans are very sanguine in the expectation of assistance and co-operation of the Sikhs, and talk in court of Sultan Mahomed having received instructions from the Durbar to do our force as much injury as possible, and that Shere Singh has an understanding with them to prevent our force re-entering the country. You must be aware whether there is any foundation for these reports.

. . . . This morning the Newab, attended by Ameen-oollah and all the chiefs, went to pay their respects to the King in the Balla Hissar. The King has paid two lakhs of rupees already, and has promised one more in ten days. The Newab is Minister—Ameen-oollah, Naib; and oaths and protestations have been taken on the Koran that they are to be friends to each other, and supporters of the true faith. The Newab abuses the King most loudly and openly. The King does the same with the whole family of the Barukzyes. Ameen-oollah Khan has sworn eternal faith to the cause of his Majesty—bares his head and swears most solemn oaths in the Musjids to uphold the Newab's dignity against the King and all the royal family. His Majesty has sent me several messages, saying that he submits to the extortion of the three lakhs because he is not strong enough to oppose the demand; but that, *Inshallah!* when he has received the salaam of the chiefs, he will gain power daily, and be able, should our troops come on, to play his own game with advantage to himself and ourselves. I believe that he is heart and soul in our interest; and it appears

In the mean while the English hostages remained under the protection of Mahomed Zemaun Khan. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the good old man. Faithful among the faithless, he was resolute to defend the Christian strangers at all risks; and never, when the popular clamour ran highest, and other men of note were thirsting for the blood of the captives, did he waver for an instant in his determination to shield the helpless Feringhees from the malice of his remorseless countrymen. He was a Barukzye chief—a near relative of Dost Mahomed Khan; and there was not among the Sirdars of all the tribes one in whom the spirit of nationality glowed more strongly and more purely. But whilst the independence of his country was as dear to him as to any of his brethren, he did not burn with that fierce hatred against the English which broke out in other places, nor did he ever, in the advancement of the most cherished objects of his heart, stain his patriotism with those foul crimes from which elsewhere there was little shrinking. Regarding with abhorrence the conduct of those who had betrayed our unhappy

contrary to all reason to suppose otherwise. The measures which obliged the Newab to resign his throne are, I believe—1st. The dread of our vengeance, which the people think the King can in some way avert, if a force is sent strong enough to shut out all hope of opposition. 2nd. The dread of Akbar's rising power. 3rd. The suspicions of the fidelity of their own party, who had shown symptoms of disaffection, and some of whom had openly espoused the cause of his Majesty. Such a condition cannot, I should think, last long between such Yorks and Lancasters. There is one thing very certain, that unless a very large force is sent up, which will preclude all hope of opposition, every man in the country will rise against us; and the people in the vicinity of Caubul have so compromised themselves, and dread our

vengeance so much, that they will strain every nerve to oppose us, and maybe his Majesty will feel that his safest plan is to join his countrymen against us. He said at the Durbar this morning that he was glad that affairs had taken such a turn, and that he was now able to call himself defender of the faith. This much could not have been avoided under the circumstances. . . . We are amused all day long by abuse and scurrilous verses about the Kaffirs. Books are being sold by the weight. I have not yet been able to get hold of the children—most exorbitant prices are demanded. The Newab promises, but has not the power to fulfil. Salutes are being fired, and there is a general rejoicing in honour of the coalition between the two Kings. Artillerymen are being sent to Akbar.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

people, he himself did all that, single-handed, he could do, to atone for the cruelty of his countrymen; and no father could have treated his children more kindly than the good Newab cherished and protected the English hostages who found a sanctuary in his house.*

But it was necessary, whilst the excitement ran so high at Caubul, and there was a prospect of violent contention among the chiefs, to do something more than this. Ameen-oollah Khan never slackened in his exertions to obtain possession of the persons of the hostages. Having tried every kind of stratagem, and failed to

* On the 24th of January, John Conolly wrote: "The King holds Durbar regularly, at which all the chiefs attend. He pretends to have shaken off all connexion with our government, but secretly sends me messages, professing all sincerity and attachment. There is much talk of a large force being sent to oppose the army which is said to be advancing from Hindostan; but money is wanting; the religious feeling against us continues very strong, and the chiefs have compromised themselves so much, that they will rise to a man, unless an overpowering force is sent. The Newab's kindness is beyond description, and he professes, and I believe sincerely feels, great anxiety to secure the friendship of our government. He is most deeply distressed at the treacherous conduct of the chiefs. We are quite ignorant of the intentions of government. Mohamed Akbar is continually writing for guns and ammunition; but not a man can be induced to march without pay, and every one is jealous of Akbar Khan's rising power. The Barukzye faction of his party view each other with great suspicion. Ameen-oollah is the go-between. Akbar Khan is procuring all the money he can by extortion from Sourkars and others."—[*MS. Correspondence.*] This was interlined invisibly on the advice of a bill drawn by Major Pottinger on the Feroze-

pore treasury, and was produced on the application of iolyné to the paper. On the same day Lieutenant Conolly wrote to Mr. Clerk: "The King is obliged to talk of sending troops to oppose us at the Khybur; but he declares secretly to me his sincerity for the British Government. The chiefs talk of collecting an army, but the sinews of war are wanting. . . . Thanks to the Newab, we are safe; but it has more than once been proposed that we should be killed. . . . Since our troops left this, the King has been recognised by the Newab and the rebel chiefs on the payment of three lakhs of rupees to the Newab and Ameen-oollah Khan. The former is Vizier; the latter deputy. The Newab is most anxious to serve our government. He has not been in any way concerned in the treacherous conduct to our troops. His kindness and attention to us is great, and he is sincerely anxious to establish a friendship with the British Government—being afraid of the King and Mohamed Akbar, and disgusted with the conduct of the chiefs, who deceived him with oaths and protestations. Great excitement prevails in the town; the feeling against us continues very strong, and every man will oppose our re-entering the country, unless a force is sent which will preclude all hope of successful opposition."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

secure them by fraud, he would have resorted to open violence. It was necessary, therefore, to oppose force to force; so the Newab raised an army of his own. His pecuniary resources were limited; but he did not hesitate to spend his little stores freely in entertaining followers. Mainly for the protection of the English gentlemen he raised a body of 1000 footmen, whom he armed with English bayonets; another body of 1000 horse, and some Jezailchees—in all, about 3000 men. The English guns, too, were in his possession, and he refused to yield them up to the Shah.*

* On the 15th of February Conolly wrote to Macgregor: "Since my former notes, the latest of which was dated the 10th, affairs have assumed a very different aspect. Naib Ameen-oollah, having given up the guns entrusted to his charge, has shaken the confidence of the Barukzye party in his (the Naib's) sincerity, and exposed the King's ultimate designs of making himself strong and independent of, if not inimical to, the Newab's clique. Yesterday the Naib called on the Newab, on the part of his Majesty, to send his guns to the Balla Hissar. His demand was directly refused; and the Newab declared his determination of not again attending the Durbar until his Majesty gave proofs of confidence and honesty. This morning Fuzil-i-Almud, son of Kasee Hussun, brought an order from his Majesty that I should wait upon him; but I declined the honour in this instance, as I had done before, feeling that no good could come from an interview, ignorant as I am of the intentions of government and of your wishes, and having been, moreover, frequently warned against moving out of our present residence. I gathered from the Kasee's son that his Majesty was forming a party in opposition to the Barukzye faction, the principal characters being Ameen-oollah, the Populzye, many of the Kuzzilbash, and

some of the Caubul chiefs. You will perceive among his partisans the chief conspirators in the late rebellion, Ameen-oollah, Abdool Salam, and Sekundur,—men who have nothing to hope for at our hands. I presume the first demand made by our government will be the persons of these chiefs, who planned and were most conspicuous in the late revolution; and if the information I have alluded to be correct, his Majesty may object to give up the chiefs. But these are matters for future consideration; and should his Majesty be disinclined to use his utmost endeavours for the furtherance of the wishes of government, such unwillingness must, of course, be regarded as hostility. It is generally believed and asserted throughout the town that his Majesty instigated the late rebellion. I have never been able to prove the accusation, though I cannot but think that his Majesty was, directly or indirectly, the cause of the revolution. When you know the intentions of government, you will be able to see your way more clearly. I would, however, suggest that his Majesty be made to understand, either from yourself or through me, that he must either meet our wishes or go his own road. Things are so very unsettled here just now that the most learned cannot foretell the events of the morrow. All eyes are

The King regarded his proceedings with mistrust. There was no sort of cordiality between them. The

turned upon you. The evacuation of Jellalabad will have the worst possible effect. Every one here has turned soldier, and the people are in a high state of excitement, and hungering after pay, which is not forthcoming. Our host has assembled a regiment of 1000 bayonets, 1000 horsemen, some Jezailchees, and a park of twelve guns, the ammunition for which, by the Meerza's return yesterday, amounted to about thirty shot, and no cartridges. There must be some serious disturbance ere long. We are very anxious about the sick, which we fear will be sacrificed in any popular tumult. For ourselves, we must trust to Providence; should things come to the worst, we shall try and escape to your stronghold.—P.S. We have just heard that a change of ministry has been proposed by his Majesty, and likely to be effected, Oosman Khan to be acting premier, and the Newab to be a sleeping partner.

"15th, r.m., 10 o'clock.—To-day there has been a noisy debate between the Newab and Ameen-oollah, the former abusing the latter in rather round terms. The Naib left the room in a huff, and things are as unsettled as can be. The Newab says he won't give up his guns, or go to the Durbar: and insists upon . . . his Majesty pursuing the non-interference system to which he is bound by the terms of his treaty. There is nothing but Nifag: everybody suspects his neighbour; everything is in capital trim for us if our army advances: I only wait your authority to spend a little money, and above all a guarantee to our host of a handsome provision if he sides with us, or stands neutral—for he is a most worthy and honest old gentleman, and had no hand in the late melancholy occurrences. Ghoolam Mahomed Khan has also kept aloof from the late rebellion.

There is a report that Palmer has broken up the treaty, and is again besieged in the Balla Hissar. He writes for orders, which kindly send with all expedition. For God's sake beware of Mahomed Akbar."

In a letter of March 5 the same writer says: "Futteh Jung (Shah Soojah's son) has gone out yesterday to join Akbar. Things are very unsettled here still, and the Kohistanecs are fighting amongst themselves. The Newab is still treating us with the greatest kindness. He has enlisted about 3000 men, principally for our protection, and is determined to fight rather than give us up. The Naib here has been trying to get us, and has a strong party of Sepoys enlisted also. The Newab asked me yesterday if, when his money is out, we shall be able to assist him, as he only has sufficient ready cash to pay his men for one month and a half more. Can you authorise me to make him an advance when his money fails? for, as I said before, his entertaining troops is almost entirely on our account. He would be safe enough were we not his guests. In the mean time he has bought ammunition and got his guns ready in case of an attack."

And in another letter of the same date: "The bearer will be able to tell you all the news. I have written to you several times, but have received no acknowledgment of my letters. Always try solution of Iodyne on my notes. . . . We are very kindly treated by the Newab, but close prisoners. Ameen-oollah has tried stratagem and threats to get us out of the Newab's hands, with a view of screwing us; but, thanks to the Newab, we are as yet safe, though our situation is an unpleasant one. The King is sitting in the Balla Hissar; but his authority is only nominal, all power being in the hands of Ameen-oollah. Prince Futteh Jung has started with

old Suddozye and Barukzye strife seemed about to be renewed with all its pristine vigour. At last the Shah, about the middle of the month of March, corrupted the commandant of the Newab's army, who went over with all his followers to the Balla Hissar. This event, which threatened entirely to change the state of parties at the capital, threw all Caubul into a ferment. The shops were closed; the people began to arm themselves. The Newab demanded the restoration of his troops; but the King only yielded a conditional assent. He appears at this time to have been entirely in the hands of Ameen-oollah Khan; and he replied, that if the hostages were sent to the house of the Logur chief, the recreant commandant should be sent there at the same time. The Newab, however, resolutely refused to give up the English gentlemen. The proposal seems to have strengthened Conolly's suspicions of the fidelity of Shah Soojah. It nearly cost the hostages their lives.*

a few horsemen towards Jellalabad, and will probably halt for some days at Bootkak. The King sends me occasionally messages professing sincerity for the British Government; but he does not, in his present circumstances, do anything which would lead his subjects to suspect his attachment to us, or the whole population would rise up against him."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

* A letter to General Pollock, written on the 18th of March, says: "Affairs here are as unsettled as they can possibly be. The day before yesterday the commandant of the Newab's regiment was bribed by his Majesty to desert to the Balla Hissar with all his soldiers. The Newab demanded their restoration, but was refused. Yesterday, after much dispute, his Majesty sent a message to our host, saying that the commandant should be sent to Ameen-oollah's house if we were delivered over to the same authority.

Fortunately for us the Newab refused to give us up. This proposition was made through jealousy of the Newab, and with the view to conciliate Ameen-oollah, by whom it had been represented to his Majesty that we were supplying our host with money, &c. Ameen-oollah had been for many days trying to get possession of our persons with a view to try and extort money from us. His Majesty's proposition nearly cost us our lives. . . . Since the desertion of the commandant the whole city has been in an uproar. The shops are all closed, and every man has armed himself. The feeling against us is reawakened. The gates of the Balla Hissar are half shut; and each chief has collected his followers. Three or four thousand men have flocked round our host. The Barukzye's and Suddozye's party-spirit bids fair to be renewed with all its rancour. . . . The King has, however, now but few friends, and his

It now seemed that Caubul was about to become the theatre of internecine strife. The gates of the Balla Hissar were half closed, and the Shah never ventured beyond them. The chiefs were all mustering retainers. The King was endeavouring to cast suspicion on the nationality of the Newab; and the Newab's party were doubting the fidelity of the King. The Populzye leaders of the insurrection clustered round the monarch, but he had neither popularity nor power. Money he had; but making an outward show of poverty, he resolutely refused to produce it; and the people began to abuse him for his parsimony. In this conjuncture he continued to write to the British authorities, declaring that he could do anything for them if they would only send him money; but the British authorities were deaf to his entreaties, and only sent him advice.

Containing the King's version of the causes and circumstances of our disasters at Caubul, and throwing some light upon his own character and conduct, the letters of Shah Soojah are sufficiently curious and interesting to induce me to insert a few of them in this place:

FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(Received January 21st, 1842.)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor: you are aware of all that has occurred here. Notwithstanding all I said regarding the treachery of these men, they (the British) did not understand, but were guided by the advice of my enemies—that is, the Barukzyes—until arrived at this pitch. The clans of the Barukzyes had this object, that suspicion and ill-will should exist between the British and me. To the British they said, that I had instigated the rebellion; and to the Mahomedans they said, that I and

parsimony is as a proverb; and his suspected connexion with us adds to his unpopularity. . . . The Naib has written for the Kohistanes to accompany him on a crusade, and

unless some accommodation is made with his Majesty, the Balla Hissar will in all probability be the first point of attack. It will be a popular cause, as there are hopes of plunder."

the Feringhees were one, until they made me generally unpopular. Well; such was fated! It has caused me much grief and regret. God grant this wish of my heart, that the fate of Sir William Macnaghten and Mr. Trevor and the other gentlemen may befall my enemies! I frequently desired them, on the first outbreak of the rebellion, to bring everything into the Balla Hissar, which is a place of strength. They did not listen to my advice. I then begged them to endeavour to gain time—that when I could arrange matters with these men (Afghans) all would be well. During the time that I was besieged, I expended all that I had collected with so much labour, until I brought every one of influence over to my side by payment. Please God they may remain faithful to me!

No one but myself could manage these people (Afghans) and carry on the government. My sincerity and friendship to the East India Company was formerly well known: at present it is as evident to all the world as the light of day. If I had only some treasure, that during the two or three remaining months of winter I might strengthen myself, please God there is no one in this country who could displace me, and, by the blessing of God, everything would be arranged according to my desire. The men here are not to be won without money. God grant this wish of my heart! Before this I spent four lakhs of rupees in this affair, and I also gave two lakhs more; I have nothing else left. If some money could be received that I might win over these men, please God everything could be arranged according to my desire. It is to be hoped, as you will see, that in a few months I could collect horse and foot so that no one could stir. God grant this wish of my heart!

The bearer of this will verbally inform you of all other circumstances. It is advisable that you should send this paper to Peshawur, or even to the Governor-General. And send me an answer to this speedily. Whenever you hear of the arrival of this paper at Peshawur, be good enough to let me know, that I may feel sure of its having passed out of this country; because the evil-disposed are spreading reports that I am united to the Feringhees. Until I have gained my proper footing, it is necessary that, for some time, money should be sent to enable me to manage matters. When I have succeeded in establishing my power, I shall not require assistance from any one. Everything will be easy. Don't

let the men of this country know these things. Afterwards, whatever may be desirable for my good and for yours, God will grant. And God grant this wish of my heart! The bearer will tell you how matters stand. Whenever money has been received and I have reinstated myself, I shall have these people so much under my control, that if I order it they will carry the shoes of the Sahibs on their own heads.*

FREE TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

*(Without date, brought on the 2nd of February, by a messenger fifteen days from
Caulul.)*

Be it known to my friend that I am King, and know the people well. It is right to treat people according to their deserts; some by kindness, others by severity.

Some evil-disposed persons, from fear of me, took refuge with Sir W. Macnaghten and Sir A. Burnes, and I could say nothing to them: they stirred up strife.

During the last two or three years I considered the Sahibs, and especially the Envoy, whom I valued more than my life, as my equals; without their pleasure I did nothing.

It was God's will I should see what I would have wished not to have seen. May no other have such experiences.

Could it have been my wish to see my enemies and their families in the place of my friends?

Once or twice I wrote to you to send a person to inquire and inform you of the state of things in this country; but it was not done.

For two or three years I consoled the people, who told me if I was not King, they should understand it was the Feringhee; and they (the former) told me that when I came they expelled Dost Mahomed, but that I had disappointed them; that now their women left them, their country was lost; and, although at first they received pay, even that was stopped. I could not console the people, but I spoke of them to the Envoy, and told him that, sooner or later, there would be a disturbance; but he listened not to me. I told him they were deceiving him; but he believed me not, and desired me to be at ease, for that he would settle the country with two Pultuns (regiments).

* *MS. Records.*

He further told me to confine and expel some evil-disposed persons. I did so; but they got access to Nizam-oo-dowlah, and through him to the Envoy, who asked me to release them. I did so. Now I am distressed by those very people.

When the Envoy was going away I asked him to take me with him; for that I was in an extremity; I told him of what was going on, and was not listened to. I told him that complaints were daily made to me of Afghan women being taken to Burnes's Moonshee, and of their drinking wine at his house, and of women being taken to the Chaonce (cantonments) on horseback, and of my having myself witnessed it. When people complained to me of such things, I asked who did so, that I might inquire; and told them not to defame the Sahibs. I first comforted and then reproved them; and said, if any person uses violence to your women, tell me, and inquiry shall be made.

The people have often before acted as they have now; they confined my brother Mahmood in the Balla Hissar; the conspirators then were Mooktear-oo-dowlah and Ahmed Khan, Noorzye, &c. They pretended it was a quarrel between the Sheeahs and Soonces; but it proved a great matter, and they saw that without me they could not settle matters. I was then among the Kakurs. The Khans sent for me, and all obeyed me.

In the present instance people said, "There are crores of rupees in the Chaonce; let us strengthen Islam." Such are the people. Three or four dogs are gone (dead); as many remain.

Nizam-oo-dowlah was a dog and ruined all. I begged the Envoy not to ruin the people. Nizam-oo-dowlah said to the Douranees, the King and Envoy will destroy you. I will help you, but Captain Trevor will not let me. The people were thus stirred up. I was annoyed, but could not help myself; now, please God and by the help of friends, much may be done.

All were against me on account of you. They sent to me to separate myself from you, and for the sake of the faith to be King myself (some Sahibs were then in the Balla Hissar). I did not give a reply at the time, but sent word to the Envoy, who told me to turn them away. I did so, saying I owed everything to the Sahibs. They told me I would repent.

For some days there was fighting near the Chaonce and Balla Hissar and Balla Boorj; at which time I sent word to the Envoy to come with all his baggage to the Balla Hissar, where the

troops could hold out for a year or two, telling him that three or four thousand of the inhabitants might be turned out, and guns and stores brought. After much debate, no answer was given. I said, "Very good! Please yourselves."

Some days after I sent to the Chaonee, and warned them not to abandon it; that I knew the designs of the enemy, who intended to attack them; and by expending five or six lakhs of rupees I endeavoured to bring the people from the common enemy towards myself; but they told me to separate myself from you. On this account three or four Barukzyes separated themselves from me; but though I could not trust people, I managed matters by first paying three or four lakhs, and afterwards two or three, which they asked of me, thinking I would refuse, and they would have an excuse for separating from me; but I gave all I had, and now am moneyless. If, however, I had money, I could openly do much; but nothing is to be done without money (they are dogs). If I had money I could raise troops, and many of my old (Hindostanee) ones who returned naked are anxious to serve me; but I have no money. In heart I am yours, though all the world are separated from me.

Nizam-oo-dowlah knew a night before it occurred what was to happen, but did not tell me or the Envoy that we might prevent it.

The conspirators told the people that I was with them; and when the Prince went out with the troops, they (the traitors) said, "They are with us."

I sent Mahomed Sherreef to settle matters, but he was not attended to; and he, as well as many of my troops, was killed, which event opened the eyes of the people of Caubul; so the conspirators, to implicate the people, attacked Sir A. Burnes.

If my counsel is taken much may yet be done; or, if not, I will go to Mecca. Here the people are confirmed traitors, or I could easily settle the whole country, and Persia and Khorassan.

What was fated has happened. I have not seen it in my sleep, but have actually witnessed it. May God remove the sorrow, that my enemies and their families should be in the place of my friends. Is there any in the world who gave their enemies the means to kill them? The dog Akbar came as a beggar from Toorkistan. His enmity to the Sahib-Log and myself was apparent; but lakhs of rupees were given him to escort the troops

in their retreat; and what was the consequence? In the midst of the discussions I sent several times to the Envoy, and asked him why he nourished his enemy; but I was not attended to.

All Mussulmans turned from me on account of you; and for three months, for your sake, I experienced trouble and distress, and then the Envoy agreed to give the country to Mahomed Akbar, and to allow me a lakh of rupees a year, or four lakhs in Hindostan; but I knew and said, that as soon as they left the Chaonee they would be destroyed; and so it has proved.

Between us there were no differences, and there will not be.

When I saw how things were going, I expended money to draw the people from Mahomed Akbar; but now I can do nothing. I sent news to Macgregor, and to Ghuznec, and to Candahar.

The road is unsafe, so I cannot write aright.*

FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR (WRITTEN IN SECRET BY HIS MAJESTY'S OWN HAND).

(Received February 6th.)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor what misfortunes have befallen me! Everything occurs contrary to expectation. I wrote, that after labouring from earliest morning to nightfall, I had by a thousand schemes satisfied these men and made them swear fidelity. One came and another went; but all saying, "Be not united to the Feringhees." This is what the Barukzyes are spreading among the people. I said in reply to them, "You yourselves have said that they (the Feringhees) have done nothing for the Sirkar, and have not fulfilled their promises; then how should the Sirkar be well disposed towards them? During the time that I was with them I felt that my name suffered, and I felt this disgrace—that it was known to all the world. I continued with them until the time when Sir William Macnaghten purposely told me to cast them (the Feringhees) off.† I then dismissed them, and you yourselves informed me that they (the Feringhees) had come to an understanding with Mahomed Akbar. How then could I still preserve any understanding with them? Rest

* *MS. Records.*

† Alluding to his Majesty's dismissing the troops at Sir William Macnaghten's request from the Balla Hissar.

perfectly satisfied. At present I have no understanding with the Feringhees." At length, by every means in my power, I pacified them. These men at present, whether Barukzyes or other Afghans or Parsewans, are all obedient to me. Without my orders they do nothing. However, I place no trust in them. God grant that I may obtain the wish of my heart! I have no other desire. I cannot think that you are possessed of a proper sense of honour, since Dost Mahomed and his family remain there with honour. Should Akbar fall into my power, if I am a Mussulman or a man, what treatment he shall receive! Dost Mahomed and his wives and children, in revenge for the Sahibs who have fallen in his country, should be seen wandering in destitution through the bazaars and streets, that it should be known to all the world. What has been your treatment of that dog (Dost Mahomed)? So much wealth! And what return have you received from this faithless wretch (Mahomed Akbar)? May God accomplish this desire of my heart! It is now some days since they (the Afghans) have requested me to send Shumshooden Khan to Ghuznee. Until to-day I have delayed. I have also made delays in the direction of the Khybur. At length I am helpless, and if I do not consent I shall be suspected. And from Khybur intelligence has come that 200 men have been killed, and two loads of treasure and two guns abandoned to the enemy, and that Mackeson Sahib is shut up in Ali-Musjid requiring succour. If this is true, what management! How often have I said that if I possessed money I might collect some thousands of troops of my own! I should not require assistance from any one. I could do anything I liked. But I have nothing whatever. At this moment there is only remaining two or three thousand ducats. These men, who are my own servants, have remained with me; but, poor wretches, how many months are they in arrears! The other Afghans I have ordered to be mustered daily in my presence. Such as I may select I shall continue in service. I never have had and never can have any interest separate from yours. Alas! that you should not have known my worth! I will delay the despatch of the men some days longer. I shall be suspected. If I could know the truth I would arrange accordingly. If you think that this affair will succeed, and that an army will come, let me know the truth; and if it is unlikely, write to me that I may make such arrangements as shall fully satisfy you that not a cat belonging to you

shall be injured. The retreat of the Caubul Pass was quite a different affair. All were then our mortal enemies. If I had money I should not require assistance from any one. Since I have no money, if the Lord (Auckland) does not think it advisable to send it, I must go somewhere else. There is not another person but myself who could manage this affair. I know these men well; and I have not seen a man who could do anything without my permission. Write these circumstances to the Governor-General, and tear up this paper. What misfortunes have befallen! Write explicitly, that arrangements may be made accordingly. They (the Afghans) have made many petitions regarding Candahar, that an order may be sent to the prince. It has been written and sent, carefully worded, to the best of my ability.

About this affair of Mackeson, I cannot understand what management this is. If it is true, you are destroying yourselves. I don't know whether there is an understanding between you and Shere Singh that your troops should have a free passage (through the Punjaub). I wrote to Shere Singh that it was a religious war, that he might understand. Tear up this paper; and remove from about your person the men of this country.*

FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(Received February 8th.)

Let it be known to Captain Macgregor, I have no certain intelligence about affairs. I don't know what perverseness is this, that up to the present time you will not appreciate my worth, nor understand your own position or interests. You do not correctly explain things to me; and if there is a prospect of your being supported from the rear, and you have, or are likely to have, a good understanding with Shere Singh, so that an army may come, then I would act here as such a state of circumstances would render expedient; but if there be no prospect of this, and you determine on any other course, I will then take such measures as may be desirable. May God grant the wish of my heart! I have prayed God to grant this prayer. God is omnipotent. Write to the Governor-General. I am not happy in this country; but if

* *MS. Records.*

my friends desire it, I cannot oppose myself to their wishes. The settlement of that country can be satisfactorily managed; but the country could never have been settled in the manner in which you were making arrangements.*

FROM H. M. SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

Let it be known to Mr. Macgregor, to the General, and to the other gentlemen, that which I did not wish to see, and which never entered into my imagination, it has been my lot to see. What I have already suffered, and am suffering, is known only to God.

Although I frequently remonstrated, they paid no attention to my words. These men have made fraud and deceit their trade. . . . During the time they were committing these excesses, and would not come in for some days, they continued plundering the shops and exciting disturbances in the city; and in this business all the Sirdars were concerned, and on this account the lower orders became like hungry dogs: but God shamed them for they got nothing. What has happened was fated, and was owing to our own neglect. However much I said, "Come up above; the fort is strong; for one year no one can be brought within it; with my servants, and from 500 to 1000 others, the fort would be strong; and 2000 or 3000 others, with guns, sallying out might collect grain"—[it was in vain.] However, it has passed—such was our fate. I sent messages to cantonments, begging them not to defer their coming from to-day to to-morrow, from to-morrow to next day—that, please God, all would be right.

I had collected five or six lakhs of rupees in gold mohurs, knowing that these people, except for money, would not act honestly, even with God. I spent three or four lakhs of rupees amongst them. Every tribe made oath, wrote on the Koran, and sealed; but they still said, "The king and the Feringhees are one." However, I have managed to bring them thus far, and given two lakhs more. It is a pity that I have no more money. If I had any more, and could raise 2000 or 3000 sowars, and 2000 foot-soldiers of my own, I would defy any one to stir. The

* *MS. Records.*

foot-soldiers, too, who returned from the army, I collected—300 or 400—that they might be with my regiment. Oh! that God had never let me see this day! Although, if money reaches me, God will prosper everything. To give money to an enemy to collect troops, and to come and kill you—did ever any one so trust an enemy? Even now have nothing to say to that dog.* This, too, I have said to you, even as I warned you before. I am night and day absorbed in this one thought; it has occurred to my mind that it would be better if the few ladies and gentlemen should be brought here, in order that they might be released from the hands of that dog. This entered my mind, and I consulted with the Sirdars, and brought them to agree; before this, I had sent a paper to this effect to that dog. It struck me that that dog would not release and send them here. I then decided that it would be judicious that Jubbar Khan should be sent. I hope that he will bring them to this place in safety. By the blessing of God, my mind will be at ease. No one will have power to say anything to them; they will remain in safety. If this is approved of by you, I will take this course; but inform me if you do not approve of it, and can suggest anything else, that it may be arranged. Now, men of all ranks are flocking to me. . . . I have asked of God—if some money could be obtained all would go well, by God's assistance. * * * At present, my subjects make petition to me to send money, and one of the princes with guns and an army to Candahar. * * * I had sent for Mr. Conolly, and other gentlemen, to consult with them, as they had themselves asked the Sirdar to send for them; but some one said to them, "If you go to the king he will kill you." It was their (the Sirdars) intention that the king should kill them. They had sent me word secretly beforehand. I replied, that if the world was upset, and every one my enemy, I would not do so. They then said, that it was really true what Jubbar Khan and Oosman Khan had said—that the king was not separate from the Feringhees. If he is, they said, give these (English gentlemen) to the king, that he may kill them. I heard this, and gave them answer. They understood their position, and repented of the step they had taken. Since this occurrence they come and go; and I have re-assured them. They now swear and protest that they will do

* Mahomed Akbar.

nothing whatever without my wishes. If you think it can be done, God will shame my enemies.*

FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO CAPTAIN MACGREGOR.

(Written in secret by the Shah himself. Received at Jellalabad on the 7th of March.)

This is the state of affairs—that night and day I am disturbed about you. God help us! I did not wish to see such a day as this. All day I am thinking of this. The evil-disposed Mahomed Akbar, from the day he went to Lughman, has managed matters by the means of the money which was given to him. From that quarter letters arrived here (Caulbul), and money was given to men who went to join him: at length it was put a stop to, some men were even stripped (on their way to join) in Bootkhak. At last, people went under the plea of Gazza (religious war); by these means only a few now go. It is nearly one month that I have delayed (sending troops to Jellalabad): no accounts have been received (from you). I have made myself unpopular with all Mahomedans on your account, and you have not comprehended it. This is an affair affecting life. Up to this time nothing is known (of your intentions). I know not upon what misfortunes I have fallen; and these men are displeased with me, (saying) “It is not the Shah’s wish that we should go to Jellalabad; he wishes to destroy the true faith.” God help us! There is no saying when those men (British troops) will arrive. If things are thus managed, what may be expected in Hindoostan?

I am altogether devoted to you—may God protect me! If they (British troops) arrive within the next ten or fifteen days, it is well; but if not, what ought to be done? Whatever you think advisable, write to me plainly, that it may be well understood and arrangements made. I am always thinking how I can obtain possession of those gentlemen and ladies, that they may be in safety, and that this villain (Mahomed Akbar) may not injure them.

I sent a message to Mahomed Shah (Ghilzye) that, if any injury happened to them (the English prisoners), I would revenge it on him and his family, and root out his race, and that I would

* *MS. Records.*

seize him. God will prosper this matter, though it is very difficult and complicated.

These rascals (Afghans) make numerous oaths, and in their hearts there is villany. May God put them to shame!

The true state of the case is this; if you think it will succeed, and that they (British troops) will arrive, the sooner the better. This is not a matter to be trifled with.

Shumshoodcen Khan, who went to Ghuznee, I ordered not to press the garrison hard until I had completed an engagement with you.

I have forgotten my own sorrows, and am grieving for yours. Neither day nor night can I rest, nor think of anything else.

If I came myself (to Jellalabad), I could arrange the affair as I wished. It has two advantages and one objection. I am puzzled. God deliver me! All that has happened has been caused by want of forethought. Now may God give me assistance!

I always said to Sir William Macnaghten that this affair would end badly.

The day that he made arrangements for leaving (Caulbul for Bombay) I was ready to precede him, saying that I did not like the appearance of things here. He did not listen to me. The bearer will inform you of other particulars. What can I do? These men are the greatest curse in the world. If I had any money I could collect my army—then “could it be in the power of any one to injure even a dog that belonged to you?”*

FROM SHAH SOOJAH TO MR. GEORGE CLERK.

(Received on the 25th March at Lahore.)

Be it known to my friend that I am King, and know the people well; had every one been treated according to his deserts, a good foundation would have been secured in the country.

It is known to all the world how I have behaved to Sir W. Macnaghten and the rest of the Sahiban during the last three years. I have considered all of them as dear to me as my life, and especially Sir William Macnaghten, who was still dearer to me. It was God's will that I should see what I would have wished to

* *MS. Records.*

have avoided in a dream; may no other have such experience. I wish to God to see my enemies and their families in the place of my friends, and no other wish would then remain in my heart. What shall I inform you of? Whatever has happened is owing to our own carelessness. Once or twice I wrote to you to send a person to inquire and inform you of the state of affairs in this country, but it was not done. I consulted the people, and they told me, that had I not been concerned, the "Feringhees" would have seen the state of things; that when I came they expelled Dost Mahomed, anticipating every happiness under their old master; that had it been the cause of the "Feringhees," would anybody have dared to enter this country? or would such a day as this, exhibiting the loss of their honour, country, and their pay, have happened to them? They further observed that they were liable to be killed or apprehended by the British, and given up by the King without any investigation; not ever to sanction their requests for the increase of five rupees to their pay—the King had no authority. I again consulted them, told the Envoy of it; and frequently I sent for the Envoy in the garden, and brought the subject to his notice in the presence of Mr. Lawrence, who generally accompanied him; acquainted him of the rascality of the people, who would at last create some disturbance. But I was not listened to, and the information of their treacherous character, and the advice not to place confidence in them, was of no avail. I was therefore quite disgusted with these people, and proposed to return with the Envoy, seeing the state of the feelings of the people, and a disregard to my suggestions by him. I told him that complaints were daily made to me of Afghan women being taken to Burnes's Moonshee; of their drinking wine at his house; of women being taken to the cantonments on horseback, and of my having witnessed it, and observing how likely it was to create a disturbance; but all was in vain. I reproached the people for their own shamelessness, desired them to take care of these women, and not to defame the Sahibs; and said that if any person used violence towards them, to tell me, and inquiry should be made.

A Nizam-oo-doulah was appointed who corrupted the minds of the people. I told the Envoy that he was impressing on the minds of the Douranees, that the King and the Envoy were destroying them, and that he had saved them. I was anxious to

see some stipend fixed for them, but that Trevor would not consent to it, and he thus disappointed the people. All this produced no effect, until the insurrection broke out, and the insurgents told every one that the King was concerned in it. I sent Shah-zadah Futteh Jung with a few guns and troops to the town; the insurgents reported he was coming to assist them, and on his approach a skirmish took place, in which Mahomed Sherreef Khan, who was sent to restrain the people, received a wound and was killed. -It then became apparent that an insurrection had taken place; 300 more were killed and wounded up to the evening of that day; the Shah-zadah narrowly escaped by the preservation of God. The insurgents then thought of another expedient to defame all the people. They went round Sir A. Burnes's house, and did what was written in his lot. These people have often before acted as they have now; they confined my brother, Shah Mahmood, in the Balla Hissar. The conspirators were then Mooktear-oo-dowlah and Ahmed Khan, &c., and they pretended it was a quarrel between the Sheeahs and the Soonees; they saw that I alone could settle matters. I was then among the Kakurs; the Khans sent for me, and on my arrival at Caubul they all obeyed me and returned to their respective avocations. In the present instance people said there were crores of rupees to be obtained and lakhs to be shared, while the Mussulmance cause could be strengthened, and the wishes of God come to pass. A few insurgents have been removed from the way, and the remainder will be removed by God. I am quite displeased and annoyed at these people, from whom every wicked act may be expected; but through the kindness of my friends it does not appear difficult to me to settle this country, or even to conquer Persia and Teheran. All were against me on account of you; requested me to separate from you, as being inconsistent with my feelings of religion. I wrote to the Envoy, and he told me to give them a straightforward reply, which I did, saying I owed everything to the Sahibs; but they told me I should repent. I told them their lives and property were bound to the British, and they returned disappointed; but the same night they attacked the cantonment and the Balla Hissar, but to no purpose; they continued their attacks without intermission for some days, and I wrote to the Envoy to come with all his baggage and troops to the Balla Hissar, where they could hold

out for a year or two (even if no assistance arrived), and that I would detach parties to furnish supplies to avoid any scarcity. This I urged several times, but finding he was opposed to my views, I abided by his opinion. The insurrection was, however, discontinued, and the Envoy informed me that he had entered into a convention with the insurgents; that Mahomed Akbar should be the ruler of this country, that the British should retire to Hindostan, and that if I accompanied them it would be better, otherwise I should be consigned to the proposed ruler, and receive a lakh of rupees per year. I was annoyed at this treaty, and anticipated some treachery when the Sahiban and the guns left the Balla Hissar for cantonments; but it was diverted in a very brave manner by my orderly troops. I asked how a treaty could be entered into with the enemy without the sanction of one who had linked his fate with the British; but in vain. After the troops had entered the cantonment, I cautioned them not to stir out, but to pass their days there, knowing the plundering habits of the people. I was watching for the least intermission to bring the people round, and accomplished the business as formerly. I therefore spent five or six lakhs in rupees and ducats, and acceded to every wish of the people; and after working night and day I reclaimed them by presents. They promised to obey me, and to behave inimically to the disloyal; against every exertion of the Barukzyes to persuade the people of my attachment to the British. On the contrary, the Envoy entrusted lakhs of rupees, artillery, and other things to the enemy, and thus increased their power with his own hands, without in the least listening to me, until what was predestined came to pass. May no one again see such a day; and the desire I have is, that I may in this world be able to retaliate with my own hands. On their coming out of the cantonment the enemy began to plunder, and discontinued their treachery on the payment of two lakhs of rupees more. Ameen-oollah having already been gained over, I delayed the payment of the sum for a time, and the insurgents then began to reproach him, and were going to drag him away from me, when I was forced to pay them money. These people are such avaricious dogs for worldly riches, that had I possessed some lakhs of rupees now, I could have arranged every matter, and quelled the rebellion. I am entertaining all the "Tillungas" and Sowars that return in distress with the loss of their property, although I am quite disgusted and disheartened with these people,

and would have gone to Mecca, had there been no impediment. The management of this country and people is easily accomplished. The arrangements of other foreign affairs, such as those of Persia, Teheran, and Khorassan, are also simple, but they cannot be effected only by the way I point out. Whatever was destined in this case has come to pass. I never wished to see such a day. May God fulfil all my hopes. The news of my welfare is being sent to Candahar and Ghuznee, and to Captain Macgregor at Jellalabad, and you ought to remain satisfied. If you send us assistance to uphold the case, the better; otherwise there are other ways that may be followed agreeable to the advice of friends. There is nothing wanting; you can do as you like, and no one can stir without orders. The road is very unsafe.

On a slip of paper which the Cossid carried, separately concealed, was written this postscript:

Be it known to my friend that the road is very unsafe; this paper is sent to you (my friends), and it must be speedily transmitted and replied to, in order that he may act accordingly. Whatever has passed is known to God only; such as was never expected to be seen, even in a dream, has actually taken place. If I could manage to see you, everything would be right, and no wish remain ungratified. The bearer will give you every information. The sign is, "We have met before the grape, 'Tatties.'"

These letters produced little more than general assurances from the British authorities that an army was on its way to Caubul. The letters that Macgregor wrote to the Shah were very brief, and intended to convey as little meaning as possible. One or two specimens will suffice :

CAPTAIN MACGREGOR TO HIS MAJESTY SHAH SOOJAH.

Your Majesty's letter was received by me on the 21st of January, and I feel much honoured. The fact is, that what has occurred was fated. It is true that they (the British) made a mistake in not following your Majesty's advice.

Please God, you may rest at ease regarding affairs here. In this quarter there is no enemy except Mahomed Akbar, who is at

Lughman, and is the foe both of your Majesty and the British Government. The rabble of Ghilzyes who were with him have carried away to their homes what they were able to steal. With the exception of 200 or 300 Barukzyes there is no one else with him. And please God, if he comes, he will meet with a warm reception.

A copy of your Majesty's letter was immediately forwarded to Peshawur, requesting that it might be sent with all possible haste to the Governor-General, and that an answer might be received, which may be soon expected. Rest at ease, that while I breathe I will not fail to assist your Majesty to the utmost of my ability. The army with the artillery may be considered to have arrived near this; indeed, they will be here as soon as the distance can be crossed.

FROM CAPTAIN MACGREGOR TO HIS MAJESTY SHAH SOOJAH.

March 9th.

Your Majesty's letter, which was sent by the hands of a trustworthy person, has been received. Please God, if you can only cause delay for one month, whatever may be your wish can be arranged. Rest at ease, since the army under General Pollock, together with the Sikh force, has arrived at Peshawur, and may be considered as having arrived near this. Whatever the bearer of this may say is worthy of belief.*

But the difficulties of the Shah were now drawing to a close; his days were numbered. Whilst he was awaiting the receipt of answers to these letters, the excitement in Caubul was increasing—the division among the chiefs was becoming more and more irreconcilable. Horribly perplexed and bewildered, anxious at once to appear in the eyes of his countrymen true to the national cause, and to retain the good-will of the English by some show of fidelity to them, he fell into every kind of inconsistency, was suspected by both parties, and either way was rushing on destruction. At last the chiefs called upon him to prove his sincerity by placing himself at the head

* *MS. Records.*

of all the available troops, and marching down upon Jellalabad. The Shah yielded a reluctant consent; and, on the 29th of March sent round his criers to proclaim that he was about to march southward on the 31st; that the chiefs were to accompany him, and to send out their tents on the preceding day. The summons was scantily obeyed. The Kuzzilbash chief declared that as neither the King nor the minister had supplied him with money, he could not move. The King said that he had no confidence in the chiefs, and that, therefore, he would not go, but that Ameen-oollah might go for him. And so the expedition was postponed. In the mean while, Akbar Khan was writing urgent letters to Caubul clamouring for reinforcements, and urging that it was wretched policy to be eternally at variance with one another—quarrelling for money and quarrelling for rank—instead of making common cause against the hated Feringhees.*

After a pause of a few days the King again consented to march. His suspicion of the Barukyzes, however, was not easily to be allayed. Nor was it wholly without reason. Even impartial lookers-on prophesied that if he left Caubul he would either be murdered or blinded by

* On the 2nd of April Mohun Lal wrote from Caubul: "A letter has been received by Mahomed Akbar Khan, which was carried by Ameen-oollah Khan and read by the Shah. It also passed under my sight through the kindness of the Persian chiefs. It contained that Mahomed Akbar has been always writing to send the troops to assist him against Jellalabad, but nobody has heard him. Now he has been informed by his trusty men at Peshawur that five battalions of the English have reached Hussna Abdal, and when they join the forces at Peshawur they, in company with the battalions of the Najeeds of the Sikhs,

will force their march through Khaibur, though he has sent Sultan Jan with a few hundred men to reinforce the people of Khaibur; but if the English enter and pass the Khaibur once, no one shall be able to oppose them. Therefore the chiefs, as well as the Shah, at Caubul, should not quarrel for the distribution of the money and ranks, but exert themselves to come down immediately to Jellalabad and reduce it before the English should pass Khaibur; otherwise he (Akbar) is risking and ending his life for the faith of Mahomed, and will continue to exert himself as long as he lives."
—[MS. Correspondence.]

the Barukyzes.* Aware of these suspicions, the Newab sent his wife to Shah Soojah with a sealed Koran, assuring the King with a solemn oath that the Barukyzes and other chiefs would be true to him. Fortified by this assurance, the Shah moved out of the Balla Hissar on the 4th of April, but before nightfall returned to the palace, determined on the following morning to review his troops and then to start for Jellalabad. Rising early on the morning of the 5th, he arrayed himself in royal apparel, and, accompanied by a small party of Hindostanees, proceeded under a salute, in a chair of state, towards his camp, which had been pitched at Seeah-Sungh. But Soojah-ool-dowlah, the son of the Newab, had gone out before him, and placed in ambush a party of Jezailchees. As the Shah and his followers were making their way towards the regal tent the marksmen fired upon them. The volley took murderous effect. Several of the bearers and of the escort were struck down; and the King himself killed on the spot. A ball had entered his brain. Soojah-ool-dowlah then rode up; and as he contemplated his bloody work, the body of the unhappy King, vain and pompous as he was to the very last, was stripped of all the jewels about it—the jewelled dagger, the jewelled girdle, the jewelled head-dress; and it was then cast into a ditch.

The news of the King's murder spread like wildfire. Great was the consternation. Futteh Jung, the second son of the Shah, on receiving the sad tidings of his father's death, made with all speed towards the Balla Hissar; but the gates were guarded; so he turned back and sought refuge in the fort of Mahomed Khan, Bayat. That night however, Mahomed Khan, in concert with

* "The Shah, I am told, has made up his mind again to proceed in person to Jellalabad; but I scarcely believe that he will ever march, and if he does he will either be murdered or made blind by the Barukyzes."—[*Letter of Mohun Lal: MS. Correspondence.*]

Ameen-oollah, who held the Balla Hissar, restored the Prince to the palace; and they agreed to proclaim him King. The body of Shah Soojah was recovered, and for some days it lay in state. The royal family declared that until sentence had been passed upon the murderer it should not be buried. The Moollahs were assembled to expound the punishment due to so atrocious an offender; and they pronounced, on the authority of their religious books, that the murderer of the King should be stoned to death. But Ameen-oollah Khan interposed. He said that it was not a time to carry out such a sentence; all parties were bound to league themselves together to fight against the Feringhees; and intestine animosities ought therefore to be forgot.

To no one were the circumstances of the Shah's death a source of deeper horror and regret than to the good old Newab, the father of the murderer. He is said to have sworn an oath never again to see his son beneath his roof, or to suffer him to be named in his presence.* Various circumstances have been assigned as the proximate causes of the murder of the unfortunate Shah. It was said that he had drawn down upon himself the increased animosity of the Barukzyes, by appointing to the command of the army a son of Ameen-oollah Khan. Akbar Khan, too, had recently been wounded by an accidental shot from a Pesh-Khidmut, or attendant, which was said to have been designed to take the life of the Sirdar; and it had been rumoured that Shah Soojah had bribed the man to make the murderous attempt. That the Newab Zemaun Khan was not implicated in

* "I ought to have mentioned, in justice to that kind-hearted and really good man, Mahomed Zemaun Khan, whose character is esteemed by all who know him, whether Afghan, Hindostanee, or European, that he was so much horrified on hearing of the atrocious murder by his son of the late unfortunate King, that he swore never again to see him inside his house, and that henceforth his name should never be mentioned in his presence." — [Captain Johnson's *Narrative of his Captivity*: MS.]

the foul transaction, all men are willing to believe; but it was intended to strengthen the party of which he was then the acknowledged chief. It was the consummation of the great strife which for forty years had been raging between Shah Soojah and the Barukzye Sirdars. Indeed, it would have been little in accordance with the general tenor of Afghan history if this unfortunate Prince had not died a violent death. After so eventful a life, it would have been strange indeed if he had sunk to rest peaceably on his bed.

Among the obscurer points of Afghan history, there is not one more obscure than that which involves the question of the fidelity of Shah Soojah. That doubts were cast upon his sincerity has been already shown. Conscious of this, he entered upon a defence of his conduct in a series of letters to the British authorities which I have now given to the world. Written hastily, and under the influence of strong excitement, they carry very little conviction with them. The main object of these letters appears to have been the extraction of money from the British treasury. The Shah continued to assert, that having no money he had no power, but that if money were sent to him he would be able to do great things for his late allies. Death makes many revelations. The death of Shah Soojah revealed the mendacity and the avarice of the man. Some twenty lakhs of rupees, besides jewels of large value, were found to have been in his possession when he died.* This disagreeable circumstance, though by no means

* Mohun Lal, in a letter to Captain Mackeson, Caubul, April 10, 1842, says: "Prince Futteh Jung was taken prisoner in the fort of Mahomed Khan, Bayat, and at even released by force of Ameen-oollah and the Populzyes. As soon as he reached the palace he opened the

treasury hoarded up with great pains by his father, the King. He spends a good deal of it, to employ the people and make his party strong. . . . It is estimated to be twenty lakhs in cash and a considerable quantity of jewels."—[MS. Correspondence.]

conclusive against the general fidelity of the Shah, certainly will not predispose the inquirer to take an unduly favorable view of his conduct.

It must, however, be always kept steadily in view, that the circumstances of Shah Soojah's position were such as to surround him with an atmosphere of doubt and suspicion. That the chiefs made use of the King's name at the outset of the insurrection, and produced an inflammatory document said to bear the royal seal, is one of the most notorious facts in the entire history of the war. The seal was genuine, but the document was a supposititious one. Nothing is more common, in times of popular excitement, than for the Afghans to endeavour to injure one another by giving currency to forged instruments. It is to the last degree improbable that, at this time, Shah Soojah would have committed himself by putting his seal to any documents which might have fallen into the hands of his European allies, and laid bare the blackness of his treachery. But that he would have been glad to have cast off the Peringhee alliance and to have ruled without the restraint of our superintendence and interference, is not to be questioned. He may, therefore, have regarded with inward satisfaction the progress of the insurrectionary movement, and rejoiced in its ultimate success; but he does not appear to have been more than a passive instrument in the hands of others. It was obviously his policy to appear all things to all people. He could not venture to take any decided course. He never in the prime of life had been conspicuous for manliness of character; and now, in his old age, he was more than ever a waverer and a waiter upon fortune. Perhaps, I should not err if I were to say that he was true neither to his own countrymen nor to his British allies. He was prepared to side with either the one or the other, according to the direc-

tion in which the tide of success might be seen to flow. He had no affection for the English; but he dearly loved English money. He knew the value of British aid; but he would fain have had it from a distance. From the very first he had disliked the obtrusive manner in which it had been forced upon him. He wanted the *prestige* of British support without the encumbrance of British control. To retain our friendship, and yet to rid himself of our presence, was unquestionably the desire of the Shah; but it is doubtful whether his desire would ever have shaped itself into any overt acts of hostility against the government which had restored him to the throne of his fathers. He was not capable of gratitude, even if there had been anything to call it forth;* but he had sufficient sagacity to know that his political existence was dependent upon the will of the British Government. And he was cautious not to do anything to provoke its vengeance. The chiefs believed at the commencement of the November outbreak, that though the insurrection would soon be crushed, such a manifestation of popular feeling would in all probability cause the British authorities to tremble for the safety of their position, and induce them to evacuate the country in the ensuing spring. Encouraging a similar belief, Shah Soojah may have regarded with inward satisfaction the outbreak of the revolution. But he was surprised and alarmed by the rapidity of its progress; and was wholly unprepared for the sanguinary termination of his connexion with his Christian allies. That he was in a state of painful depression and prostration throughout the entire period of the insurrection is not to be ques-

* I utterly repudiate the cant which fixes the stigma of ingratitude on the character of Shah Soojah. No one knew better than the Shah that we had carried him back to Caubul, and kept him there, not for his purposes but for our own.

tioned; and it is scarcely less certain that he never wholly recovered from the terror which then bewildered him. The irruption culminated somewhat too violently for a man of Shah Soojah's temperament; and when he found what a convulsion had been raised around him, he shrunk back in dismay. On either side dangers and difficulties started up in his path. He strove to save himself by doing little, and being to all outward seeming the friend both of the Afghan insurgents and their European foes. Duplicity is never long successful. Doubted by both parties, the King became an object of general contempt. He trimmed between the two contending hosts, and escaped the rocks on neither side of the vessel.

On such a question as this, it is right that the opinions of the leading political officers, who were best acquainted with the character and the conduct of the Shah, and had the best opportunities of investigating the circumstances of the Caubul insurrection, should be summarily recorded. "To my mind," wrote Captain Mackeson to Mr. Clerk, "there has ever appeared but little doubt that his Majesty Shah Soojah was, in the commencement, the instigator of the Caubul insurrection. Had the first blow struck by the rebels been effectual, his Majesty might, perhaps, have thrown off the mask earlier; but our troops in cantonments held their position though surrounded by foes without number, whilst those in the Balla Hissar held his Majesty in check. Nay, the chances were at one time so much in favour of our success, that his Majesty discarded his own instruments, refusing all their solicitations to place himself at their head. To such an extent did he carry his reluctant adherence to us, that at length the rebels, in their turn, were obliged to seek for a leader among

the Barukzyes. His Majesty then husbanded his own resources, allowing the Barukzyes and our people to fight out the battle. Sir William Macnaghten would not have treated with Mahomed Akbar Khan had he not been convinced of the treachery towards us of Shah Soojah”*

Captain Macgregor’s opinion coincides, but with some amount of qualification, with that of the last witness. “I agree with you” (Mackeson), he wrote, “in thinking that the Shah was more or less implicated in the insurrection; but when he saw that it took such a serious turn, I really believe that he repented—even so soon as he heard of Burnes’s assassination, and of the massacre of the other officers in the city. His Majesty pressed Sir William to remove all the British troops into the Balla Hissar, which in itself looked like a friendly feeling towards us.”†

The opinion of Major Rawlinson sets in an opposite direction. It throws a side-light from Candahar on the conduct of the Shah at this time. “From everything I can learn, I should say that the Shah was certainly well inclined to us; and if assured of our again placing confidence in him, would cordially support our advance. He has certainly done as little as he could, keeping up appearances with the Mussulman party, to complicate our position at this place, and I learn that for some time past the prevalent opinion in the Dourance camp has been that the Shah desired our success.”‡

* *MS. Correspondence.*

† Macgregor was of opinion that after the departure of the British from Caubul, the conduct of the Shah indicated a friendly feeling towards us. “The Shah is, I believe, acting in a friendly manner towards us,” he wrote to General Pollock, “and will, if he has the power, prevent the march

of an army from Caubul. He knows that whilst Dost Mahomed is in our possession we can make use of him as a powerful weapon against his Majesty, and this is the great hold we have upon his friendship.”—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

‡ *MS. Correspondence.*

But of all the officers connected with the British Mission, John Conolly was the one who enjoyed the best opportunities of arriving at a correct estimate of the conduct of the Shah. During the insurrection he was in attendance on the King at the Balla Hissar, and he was at Caubul up to the time of his death. Conolly's opinions are on record. He seems at one time to have entertained the strongest possible conviction that the Shah was true to his British allies. "I believe," he wrote on the 17th of January, "that he is heart and soul in our interest; and it is contrary to all reason to suppose otherwise." But by the 15th of February his belief in the fidelity of the Shah seems to have been shaken; for he wrote to Macgregor: "It is generally believed and asserted throughout the town that his Majesty instigated the late rebellion. I have never been able to prove the accusation, though I cannot but think that he was, directly or indirectly, the cause of the revolution." A month afterwards, writing still more distinctly to General Pollock, he cast further doubts on the fidelity of the Shah. "I would suggest," he said, "that some direct understanding be come to with his Majesty. It is generally believed that he caused the late rebellion; and his conduct lately has been strange, to say the least of it. He tried to raise a popular tumult against us, hoping thereby to ruin the Newab. He did not interest himself in any way about our sick when their wretched, helpless condition was formally represented to him in a petition from me—added to the circumstance alluded to of his telling our host to send us to Ameen-oolah, who is our most bitter enemy. He is, moreover, surrounded by the Populzye leaders of the late insurrection, whose persons, I presume, our government will demand. I have not received a letter from him for a month; but

the fear of being suspected of being in communication with us may be the cause of his disregard of us." And again, at the end of the month, writing to Major Rawlinson, he said: "The King is generally abused and reported as the instigator of the late rebellion. He has proved himself, I think, unworthy of our friendship. If we are not able to prove his villany, his cunning will, no doubt, prompt him to side with us on the near approach of our troops, for he is well aware that his subjects would seize him if he ventured out of the Balla Hissar. He is, as the Afghans say, like grain between two mill-stones."*

Many more passages might be cited from the correspondence of our political officers to show the opinions entertained at this time by those most competent to determine the question of the Shah's fidelity. But, after all, the question remains an open one. The future historian may still lose himself in a sea of conjecture. From the facts before us, and from all that is known of the character of Shah Soojah, the inference is, as I have said, that the King was faithful neither to his own countrymen nor to his British allies. He was at best a poor creature. He had few good qualities. But it should in justice be remembered, that he was surrounded by circumstances against which an abler and a better man might have struggled in vain. He had long been greatly perplexed and embarrassed by the anomalies of his position. He was tired of playing the part of the puppet; and had begun to long for an opportunity either of becoming King indeed, or of throwing down the trappings and the cares of royalty, and ending his days in the calm security of his old asylum at Loodhianah. He used to say that Macnaghten did all the good that was done in Afghanistan—and all the evil too; for that he himself did

* *MS. Correspondence.*

nothing. Unpopular measures of which he was not the author were executed in his name; he was compelled outwardly to sanction much of which he inwardly disapproved; he saw dangers thickening around him without the power of averting them, and painfully felt that he had always been a cypher, and had now become a hissing and a reproach.

Under the directorship which we had forced upon him, Shah Soojah was not happy. He was altogether a disappointed man. He did not find the sweets of restored dominion what he expected them to be. He was an isolated being. The sympathies neither of the Afghans nor the English were with him. All men suspected him. None loved him. When, therefore, he talked about leaving Caubul he was probably not insincere; but he may have thought sometimes that if the English would leave Caubul he might enjoy his sovereignty more. If to have desired to rid himself of an incubus, which sate so heavily upon him, was to be faithless to the British, Shah Soojah was unquestionably faithless; but this is a kind of infidelity so common to humanity of all ranks and in all places, that to record it against the Shah is only to say that he was a man.

But as regards the actions of the King, it is to be observed that Shah Soojah was not a man of action. His early life had been one rather of strenuous passiveness than of genuine activity. He had always been courting suffering—having much done to him, and for him, rather than doing much for himself. Since the British had taken him in hand he had actually done nothing. When the insurrection burst over Caubul, he sate down and waited. After the departure of the British he sate down and waited. He was afraid of both parties; and unwilling to declare himself openly until he could clearly see how the contest would end. He had not strength of mind suffi-

cient to keep him faithful to any one. He was not even true to himself. The question is less a question of fact than of character. The solution of the difficulty is to be found in the idiosyncrasy of the man. He had led a very eventful life ; but the vicissitudes of his career had not strengthened his character. Anything decided, active, or energetic, was not to be expected from him. The infirmity of age was now superadded to the infirmity of purpose which had characterised his greener manhood ; and if he had taken any decided part in the great contest which followed the outburst of the Caubul insurrection, it would have been an inconsistency at variance with the whole tenor of his past life. As it was, the conduct of the man in this crisis was in keeping with all that was known of his character and his antecedents. Shah Soojah was not a hero ; and he did not play a heroic part. The British Government had picked him out of the dust of Loodhianah, simply as a matter of convenience to themselves ; and they had no reason to complain that, in a great and imminent conjuncture, he thought less of their convenience than his own. He proved himself at the last to be very much what we had helped to make him. We could not expect him to be an active workman, when we had so long used him as a tool.

CHAPTER II.

[November, 1841—April, 1842.]

Affairs at Candahar—Evil Tidings from Caubul—Maclaren's Brigade—Spread of the Insurrection—Arrival of Atta Mahmed—Flight of Sufdur Jung—Attack on the Douranee Camp—Continued Hostilities—Attack upon the City—Action in the Valley of the Urghundab—Fall of Ghuznee—Defence of Khelat-i-Ghilzyc—Movements of England's Brigade.

THE attention of the reader ought now no longer to be withheld from that part of the country where General Nott and Major Rawlinson were gallantly and successfully holding out against the insurgent Douranees, and maintaining the character of the British nation before the tribes of Western Afghanistan. At the beginning of November, wrote Rawlinson, in a summary of events, drawn up with such masterly distinctness and comprehensiveness, that the historian has little to do, in this place, but to submit himself to its guidance,* "affairs wore a more tranquil and promising appearance in the Candahar province than I had ever witnessed since my assumption of the charge of the agency. Akram Khan, the leader of the Derawat rebellion, captured by Lieu-

* *Major Rawlinson to Government: March 6, 1842.* This important despatch was published by Lord Ellenborough in the Government Gazette, and subsequently appeared in the Blue Book. To an unpublished letter, written by Major Rawlinson to Mr. Colvin, on the 13th of December, I am indebted for the information contained in the earlier portion of this chapter.

tenant Conolly, had been executed at this place by his Majesty's orders. Eight of the most influential of his colleagues had been sent by me, according to the orders of the Envoy, under the charge of Lieutenant Crawford, to Caubul; that officer having my written instructions to destroy his prisoners in the event of an attempt at rescue. The Hazareh and the Belooch tribes had been effectually conciliated; the Douranees of the northern and western districts had been humbled and overawed."

The troops then at Candahar consisted of her Majesty's 40th Regiment; the 2nd, 16th, 38th, 40th, and 43rd Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry; Captain Blood's battery (Bombay Artillery); the Shah's Horse Artillery, under Captain Anderson; some regiments of the Shah's infantry, and some detachments of Irregular Horse (Shah's and Skinner's), the weakness of the force lying in this arm. The tranquillity of the country seemed to authorise the diminution of this force, and a brigade, comprising the 16th, 42nd, and 43rd Regiments of Bengal Native Infantry, was about to proceed, under Colonel Maclaren, to the provinces of Hindostan. On the 7th of November it commenced its march; but on the evening of that day some startling intelligence was brought into Candahar. A detachment of 130 men under Captain Woodburn—that officer who, in the month of July, had so distinguished himself on the banks of the Helmund, in action with the Douranee rebels under Akhtar Khan—was proceeding from Candahar to Caubul, when, on the 2nd of November, after they had passed Ghuznee, they were attacked by swarms of Afghans, through whom, with consummate gallantry and skill, Woodburn fought his way to the little fort of Syedabad. The place was occupied by a man supposed to be friendly to us;* and the English officer, surrounded as

* He was connected with our postal establishment.

he was by the enemy, gladly accepted his offer of protection. But there was no safety within the fort. For a day and a night he held his position against a besieging enemy, and nobly he defended himself. But his ammunition fell short; and then there came tidings of the success of the insurgents at Caubul. On this, the chief admitted parties of the enemy into the towers of his own Harem, which overlooked the court-yard in which the Sepoys were quartered. Then the massacre commenced. Many of the Sepoys were killed on the spot. Others threw themselves over the walls, and were shot down outside the fort. Woodburn himself, with a few of his men, took post in a tower of their own court, and for some hours they gallantly defended themselves. But they fell at last. The enemy burnt them out; and massacred them almost to a man.

On receipt of this intelligence Rawlinson at once recommended the General to halt Maclaren's brigade. It was accordingly brought back to Candahar. It was plain that some mischief was brewing in the country to the North. A week of doubt and anxiety passed; and then letters came from Macnaghten and Elphinstone, announcing that Caubul was in a state of insurrection, and ordering Maclaren's brigade to be despatched at once to the capital. These letters came on with endorsements from Colonel Palmer at Ghuznee, and Major Leech at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, which showed that in the intervening country there were signs of the coming storm.* On the 17th of November, accompanied by a

* The letter to General Nott was worded as follows :

" Assistant Quarter-Master-General's Office, Head Quarters, Caubul, November 3, 1841.

" SIR,—I have the honour, by direction of Major-General Elphinstone,

commanding in Afghanistan, to request that you will immediately direct the whole of the troops under orders to return to Hindostan from Candahar to march upon Caubul instead of Shikarpore, excepting any that shall have got beyond the Khojuck Pass, and that you will instruct the officers

troop of horse artillery, the three regiments commenced their march to the northward.

Anticipating that some evil might arise from the presence of the Prince, Sufder Jung, in the province, after his supercession by his elder and better disposed brother, Rawlinson had invited him to come in from Zemin-dawer, and he now suggested the expediency of his proceeding to Caubul, with Captain Hart's Janbaz

who may command to use the utmost practicable expedition. You are requested to attach a troop of his Majesty the Shah's Horse Artillery to the above force, and likewise half the first regiment of cavalry.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

"J. PATON, Capt. A. Q. M. G.

"To Major-General Nott,
Commanding at Candahar."

This letter was sent, under a flying seal, through Colonel Palmer, at Gluznee, and Major Leech, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye—Palmer sent it on with this endorsement: "The country getting more disturbed every day. Burnett came in yesterday after being attacked on the road. He was pursued, when he fortunately fell in with some horsemen I had sent after the fifty-two camels from Candahar, which have been taken off. No tidings of Crawford." Leech wrote:—

"Khelat, Nov. 12, 1841.

"The whole of the Ghilzye prisoners escaped from Caubul, and the family of Husan Khan from this neighbourhood. Khaker Khan and Munsoor Khan in custody, and all the other families expected by this evening to be safe at this place. — What are we to say to the appearance *en route* to Candahar at this crisis of Saifadeen, nephew of Atta Mahomed Khan. He was here on the evening of the 8th."

Macnaghten's letter was addressed to Rawlinson, and it ran in the following words:—

"Caubul, Nov. 3, 1842.

"MY DEAR RAWLINSON,—We have a very serious insurrection in the city just now, and from the elements of which it is composed, I apprehend much disturbance in the surrounding country for some time to come. It would be only prudent, therefore, that the 16th, 42nd, and 43rd, with a troop of Horse Artillery and some cavalry, should come here immediately. General Nott will be written to officially in this respect. We have been shelling the city all day, but apparently with little effect. I hope there will be no difficulty about supplies. Your writing to Leech will obviate this. On second thoughts I shall forward this letter under a flying seal through Palmer and Leech. Unless you send up this reinforcement there will be a probability of our supplies being cut off.

"W. H. MACNAGHTEN."

A line from Captain Lawrence to Colonel Palmer requested him to send on the letter express through Leech. Leech forwarded it with a few words to Rawlinson, saying, "What think you of a Prince and some treasure with the brigade? Please reinforce this post (Khelat-i-Ghilzye) by 160, or if possible, 200 men—infantry." Another endorsement stated, "There are nearly 100 maunds of atta here, belonging to the Bengal commissariat disposable for the brigade proceeding towards Caubul. We have six months supply for the garrison.

"H. MILNE."

—[MS. Records.]

regiment, which was to follow in the rear of Mac-laren's brigade. The Prince yielded to the suggestion, and went. The fidelity of the Afghan horse was doubtful, and Rawlinson was glad to rid himself of the presence both of a discontented Prince and a body of treacherous Afghan horsemen—soldiers raised, mounted, armed, equipped and disciplined by Shah Soojah and his British supporters, seemingly for the one sole purpose of drawing their swords against the very power to which they owed their military existence.

All through the month of November Candahar remained tranquil. But it was obvious that the course of insurrection was setting towards the West. Tidings came in from the country about Ghuznee, which showed that the road to the capital was infested by the insurgents. Lieutenant Crawford, who was escorting the Douranee prisoners to Caubul had been attacked by overwhelming numbers near Ghuznee; and had suffered his prisoners to escape; or rather, had lost them with all his baggage, and a considerable number of his horses and men.* Soon afterwards Guddoo Khan, an Afghan

* It does not appear that the conduct of Lieutenant Crawford was, in any way, open to censure. He was the bearer, as has been shown, of written instructions, authorising him to destroy the prisoners if they attempted to escape, but there seems to have been no connivance between them and the party who attacked the escort. Crawford himself says, in a narrative which he drew up, and which was subsequently published in a Bombay paper: "One prisoner was cut down by a horseman of the enemy (plainly showing there was no collusion between them), two others rolled over in a ditch, where, with their horse a top of them, and their legs chained under his belly, I left them; indeed, I now found it was impossible I could ever get my charge into Ghuznee

alive, and I had only to decide on putting them to death or setting them at liberty. My instructions would have justified my pursuing the former course, but the poor wretches had clearly made no attempt to escape; they were in no way answerable for the attack made on my party, as was evident from one of their number falling by the sword of our adversaries; and I conceived then, and do now conceive, that in letting these men go with their lives, I was not only acting according to the strict letter of my instructions, but that justice and humanity required I should not slay them in cold blood. Had I put them to death, then Shumshoodeen or Mahomed Akbar would have been equally justified in taking our lives (the lives of all their prisoners) on the advance

officer in the service of the Shah and his British supporters, who had accompanied Crawford's detachment—a man of unimpeachable integrity and unquestionable gallantry and good conduct—was on his return from Ghuznee to Candahar “overpowered by numbers and slain, with seventeen of his best men, losing at the same time forty-five horses, and all the arms and baggage of the Ressaleh.” These incidents seemed to portend the near approach of the thunder-clouds that were breaking over Caubul. Candahar was as yet only beneath the skirts of the storm.

On the 8th of December Maclaren's brigade returned to Candahar. How it happened that these regiments had failed to make good their march to Caubul is not to be satisfactorily explained. It is still stated by officers who accompanied the detachment, that the difficulties of the march have been greatly exaggerated; and that, at all events, they might have been overcome. Nott sent the brigade with a reluctance which he took no care to conceal. It was his wish to retain the three regiments at Candahar; and he was not a man to shrink from the utterance of his feelings on such a subject as this. “Remember,” he said to Maclaren and his staff, when they presented themselves at the General's quarters to take leave of their old commandant, “the despatch of this brigade to Caubul is not my doing. I am compelled to defer to superior authority; but in my own private opinion I am sending you all to destruction.” The brigade marched; but, starting under such auspices, there was little likelihood of its reaching its destination. There were few officers in the force who did not know that, on the first colourable pretext, it would be turned back.

of Pollock and Nott on Caubul. I had acted perfectly right.” These may add that the Court of Inquiry, escaped prisoners, however, subsequently became the most active of which I called for, after investigation all the circumstances, decided that I our enemies.

A pretext very soon presented itself. Two marches beyond Khelat-i-Ghilzye there was a light fall of snow. On the following day there was more snow, and some of the commissariat donkeys died upon the road. On the next, Maclaren halted the brigade, and ordered a committee to assemble and report upon the state of the commissariat cattle, with reference to their fitness for the continuance of the march to Caubul. The committee assembled; registered the number of deaths among the carriage-cattle during the two preceding days; and reported that as winter had now set in, and as the loss of cattle would increase every march that was made to the northward, it would be impracticable for the force to reach Caubul at all in an efficient state. On this, about the end of November, Maclaren ordered the brigade to retrace its steps.

But the snow had now ceased. The little that had fallen soon melted away, and for weeks not another flake fell throughout the entire country. The weather was remarkably fine and open; and there is not a doubt that the brigade might easily have made good its way to Caubul. But it does not appear ever to have been seriously intended that the force should reach its destination. Maclaren and his officers knew well that the return of the brigade to Candahar would be welcome to General Nott, and that there was not likely to be a very close inquiry into the circumstances attending the retrograde movement. There was in reality little more than a show of proceeding to the relief of Caubul. The regiments were wanted at Candahar; and to Candahar they returned. How far their arrival might have helped to save Elphinstone's force from destruction can only be conjectured; but it is right to admit the belief, that if Nott had known to what straits the Caubul army would soon be reduced, he would not have uttered a word to encourage the return of the relieving brigade to Candahar.

But whatever may have been the causes of the failure, soon after the retrograde movement of Maclaren's brigade became known, unmistakeable signs of inquietude were discernible in the neighbourhood of Candahar. Mahomed Atta Khan had been detached by the Caubul party to raise an insurrection in that province. No sooner had the chief reached the frontier than such unequivocal symptoms of popular excitement began to manifest themselves that Major Rawlinson at once perceived the necessity of adopting active measures for the suppression of disorder and the maintenance of the tranquillity of the surrounding country. His efforts in the first instance were directed to the avoidance of any actual collision with the people, and the preservation of outward smoothness and regularity in the administration of affairs. With this primal object, he withdrew from the outlying districts all the detached troops, and concentrated them at Candahar. A single party of Janbaz, protected by the Hazarehs from the possibility of attack, were left in Tezeen, whilst all the other troops, Hindostanee and Afghan, were posted in and around the city of Candahar. But this was not enough. The safety of our military position might be provided for; but it was not sufficient to feel confident of our ability to overcome any enemy that might venture to attack us. It was obviously expedient to strike rather at the root than at the branches; to prevent the growth of rebellion rather than to beat it down full-grown. At all events, it was politic to secure such a division of parties as would annihilate even the possibility of a powerful coalition against us. Relying upon the general unpopularity of the Barukzyes with the Douranee tribes, whom the Sirdars had so long and so severely oppressed, Major Rawlinson exerted himself to get up a Douranee movement in our favour. He bound the chiefs, by all the most solemn oaths that Mahomedanism affords, to stand

firm in their allegiance to Shah Soojah and the Shazadah Timour. The priesthood ratified the bond; and the families of the Douranee chiefs were placed as hostages for their fidelity in the hands of the British officers. The chiefs themselves, with Prince Timour's eldest son at their head, and accompanied by Meerza Ahmed, the Revenue-manager of Candahar, a man of considerable talents and unsuspected fidelity, to whom Major Rawlinson had entrusted a lakh of rupees for the management of the movement, were despatched to the eastern frontier to raise the tribes against the Barukzyes and their Ghilzye allies. In the mean while the British, at Candahar, remained apparently unconcerned spectators of the contest, which, it was hoped, would resolve itself into a question of Suddozye or Barukzye supremacy in the Douranee Empire.

The objects contemplated by Major Rawlinson were, however, only partially attained. He succeeded in gaining time, and in removing the Douranee chiefs from the neighbourhood of our camp. "The Douranees quitted Candahar in the middle of December, delayed for a considerable time the advance of Mahomed Atta Khan, and prevented to the utmost of their power the spread of religious fanaticism among their tribes." But the good faith so apparent at the outset was destined soon to be overclouded. As long as the Douranees believed that to carry out the wishes of the British was really to fight the battle of the Suddozyes, they were true to our cause; but they soon began to give credit to the report that Shah Soojah himself was in the ranks of our enemies, and then they fell away from us. Even Meerza Ahmed, in whom so much confidence had been reposed, turned his fine talents against us, and became the main-spring of a hostile Douranee movement.

But they did not at once declare themselves. For a while the Douranees quietly watched the progress of

affairs. Those events as they developed themselves, seemed more and more favourable to the spread of insurrection in western Afghanistan. As the old year wore to a close, it seemed that our difficulties were thickening, and the new year came in with a crowd of fresh embarrassments. Sufder Jung had returned to Candahar. On the retrogression of Maclaren's brigade he had declared that he could not trust the Janbaz to escort him to Caubul, and again set his face towards the south. The presence of these traitorous horsemen at Candahar had always been a source of considerable anxiety to Major Rawlinson. The 1st Regiment of Afghan horse had been in Zemindawer; and when the political agent recalled the other troops from that part of the country, it was his intention that the Janbaz should remain at Ghirisk. Their enmity to the surrounding tribes was so well known that there was less chance of their uniting with the rebels in that part of the country than in any other. Owing, however, to the miscarriage of a letter, Rawlinson's intentions were defeated. The Janbaz returned to Candahar with the other details of the Zemindawer detachment, on the 9th of December. But Rawlinson was determined to remove them. He suspected their treachery; but sooner than he anticipated, they threw off all disguise, and openly arrayed themselves against us.

Before daybreak on the 27th of December the men of the Janbaz regiments were to have commenced their march to Ghirisk. There were 250 men of the 1st Regiment under Lieutenant Golding, and 150 of the 2nd under Lieutenant Wilson. Lieutenant Pattinson was to accompany them in political charge. The object of the movement was two-fold—to escort treasure and ammunition to Ghirisk, and to remove from Candahar a body of men whose fidelity was more than suspected. Two

hours after midnight the party was to have moved and made a double march, for the purpose of clearing the villages on the Urghundab, which had been greatly excited during the few preceding days. Golding was ready at the appointed hour; but, through some misconception of orders, Wilson's men were not prepared to march. So the movement was countermanded. Golding and Pattinson, therefore, returned to the tent of the former, and laid themselves down again to sleep. The 1st Janbaz regiment had been drawn up ready for the march with their cattle loaded, and the postponement of the movement now took them by surprise. They had laid a plot to mutiny and desert upon the march, and they believed that the conspiracy had been detected. After waiting for half an hour, drawn up in the chill air of early morning, they determined at once to throw off the mask; so they streamed into Golding's tent with their drawn swords, and attacked the two officers in their beds. When they thought that their bloody work was complete, they rushed confusedly out of the tent, mounted their horses, and fled. The treasure was plundered, and some horses belonging to Golding and Pattinson were carried off; but nothing else was touched by the assassins. Pattinson was stunned by a blow on the head, but recovering his senses, he made his way out of the tent, wounded as he was in seven places, mounted a horse which his Meerza had saddled on the spot, and effected his escape.* Golding was less fortunate. He rushed out of his tent, and fled on foot towards the cantonments; but the Janbaz followed and cut him down when within a short distance of our camp.†

A party of the Shah's horse under Captain Leeson, and a detachment of Captain Wilson's Janbaz, who had

* He died, after much suffering, in March.

† *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

remained true to us in the face of strong temptation, were sent out against the mutineers. The detachment came up with the rebels about twelve miles from Candahar. There was a brief, but sturdy conflict. The mutineers charged in a body, but were gallantly met by Leeson's men; and after a hand-to-hand struggle, were broken and dispersed.* Thirty of their number were killed by our cavalry, who followed up their advantage; many more were wounded, and the remainder fled in confusion to the camp of Atta Mahomed.

Two days after the defection of the Janbaz, Prince Sufder Jung fled from Candahar and joined the camp of Atta Mahomed. The Sirdar had fixed his headquarters at Dehli, about forty miles from Candahar; and there, early in January, Rawlinson was eager to attack him. The political agent saw clearly the expediency of crushing the insurrection in the bud. Every day was adding to the importance of the movement, and swelling the number of the insurgents. Some of the tribes were standing aloof, unwilling to declare themselves against us, yet in hourly expectation of being compelled to secure their own safety by ranging themselves under the banners of the Prince. But the General was unwilling to divide his force; and refused to send a brigade to Dehli. Whilst Rawlinson urged

* "The mutineers moved down to the Barukzye villages in apparent expectation of being joined by the Ooloos, but wherever they went they received neither support nor encouragement, notwithstanding that they gave out our troops were on the march to destroy the Douranee villages. The Janbaz at last took up a position at Chuplane, a village about twelve miles off, where our cavalry came up with them; Captain Leeson had to file his men across a difficult canal, and had only just formed line when the enemy charged in a body.

Our men charged at the same time in line, and the flanks swept round the Janbaz horse, who were probably not above 150 strong—numbers having left the rebel standard before reaching Chuplane. For about five minutes a splendid fight took place, hand-to-hand, when the Janbaz broke and fled, pursued by our cavalry. Of the enemy, about thirty were killed and fifty wounded in the flight and pursuit. Our loss was trifling."—[Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.]

strong political considerations in favour of promptitude of action, Nott, with equal firmness, took his stand upon military grounds, and argued that it would be inexpedient, at such a season of the year, to send a portion of his force a distance of forty miles from Candahar to beat up the quarters of a fugitive Prince. "Sufder Jung," wrote Rawlinson, "has fixed his abode at Dehli, and has declared himself the leader of an insurrection, aiming at our expulsion from the country. Up to the present time no very considerable number of men have joined his standard, and the only chiefs in attendance of any note, are those who have accompanied Mahomed Atta Khan from Caubul, together with the Ghilzye leaders, Sumud Khan, Meer Alim Khan, and the Gooroo. It would thus be an easy matter by the detachment of a brigade to Dehli to break up the insurgent force, and whether the rebels fought or fled, the consequences would be almost of equal benefit with regard to the restoration of tranquillity. But I anticipate a very serious aggravation of affairs if we allow the Prince to remain unmolested for any length of time at Dehli, or to move from that place in the direction of Candahar with the avowed purpose of attacking us. Our inactivity would not fail to be ascribed by the great body of the Ooloos to an inability to act on the offensive, and an impression of this sort having once gained ground, the natural consequences, in the present highly excited state of religious feeling, would be a general rise of the population against us."*

Reason and experience were both on the side of this argument, and Rawlinson stated the case clearly and well. But Nott took a soldier's view of the question. He argued, that to send out a brigade at such a season

* *Major Rawlinson to Major-General Nott: January 7th, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

of the year, so far from its supports, would be to destroy his men in the field, and to expose the city to the attacks of the enemy. "I conceive," he wrote in reply to Rawlinson's letter, "that the whole country is in a state of rebellion, and that nothing but the speedy concentration of the troops at this place has saved the different detachments from being destroyed in detail, and the city of Candahar from being besieged. . . . Because this young Prince is said to have assembled 1000 or 1500 followers at a distance of forty miles from Candahar, it would, indeed, be truly absurd were I, in the very depth of winter, to send a detachment wandering about the country in search of the rebel fugitive, destroying my men amidst frost and snow, killing the few carriage-cattle we have left, and thus be totally disabled at the proper season from moving ten miles in any direction from the city, or even have the means of falling back, should that unfortunately ever become necessary."*

The movements of the rebel army soon settled the question between them. No attempt having been made to dislodge the insurgent chiefs, they quietly moved down the valley of the Urghundab, and on the 12th of January took post on the river, about five miles to the west of the city of Candahar.

General Nott lost no time in moving out to attack them. Taking with him five and a half regiments of infantry, the Shah's 1st Cavalry, a party of Skinner's Horse, and sixteen guns,† a formidable body of troops,

* *General Nott to Major Rawlinson: January 8, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* There is a characteristic passage in this letter which is worthy of quotation. "I have no right to interfere with the affairs of the government of this country, and I never do—but in reference to that part of your note where you speak of political influence, I will candidly tell you that these are not times for

mere ceremony, and that under present circumstances, and at a distance of 2000 miles from the seat of the Supreme Government, I throw responsibility to the winds, and tell you that, in my opinion, you have not had for some time past, nor have you at present, one particle of political influence in this country."

† Her Majesty's 40th Regiment; the 2nd, 16th, 38th, and a wing of the

weak only in the mounted branch—he made a four hours' march over a few miles of country, and came upon the enemy,* posted near the fortified village of Killa-chuk, on the right bank of the Urghundab. The British troops crossed the river, and at once advanced in column of battalions, flanked by the artillery and cavalry, to the attack. The action was of brief duration. At the end of twenty minutes, during which our guns and musketry, telling with deadly effect upon the heavy masses of the enemy, were answered by a wild and ineffective fire from their ranks, the rebel army was in confusion and flight. The Ghilzyes fled in one direction; the Janbаз in another; the people from the villages† hastened to their own homes. Atta Mahomed attempted to make a stand; but our troops moved forward—carried the village by storm—and slaughtered every man, woman, and child, within its walls. The British line was then re-formed, and Atta Mahomed prepared to meet a second attack. But the cavalry, with two horse-artillery guns, were now slipped upon the enemy, who

42nd Native Infantry; the Shah's 5th Infantry; Anderson's two troops of Horse Artillery (Shah's); Blood's Battery (Bombay Artillery); Leeson's and Haldane's Horse.

* The number of the enemy has been variously stated at all sorts of amounts, from 5000 to 20,000. General Nott, in his official despatch addressed to the Military Secretary, says: "After a march of four hours over a very difficult country, I came in sight of the rebel army, from fifteen to twenty thousand men, drawn up in a strong position on the right bank of the Urghundab." Major Rawlinson says: "From what I myself saw, as well as from information I have received from parties in the enemy's camp, I should estimate their entire force at 5000—3000 of which accompanied the chiefs from Sir-a-bund, whilst the other 2000 joined from the Alekozye villages."—[*MS. Journal*.] There is nothing of which the

historian ought to speak with less confidence than the "number of the enemy." There is nothing more difficult to determine than the fact; and nothing more likely to draw upon him a large amount of acrimonious criticism, than his manner of stating it. As a general proposition, I think it may be laid down that military commanders seldom under-state the number of the enemy they have beaten.

† "Two canals in advance of the village were lined by matchlock men—the horse crowded the slope of the tuppа upon which Killa-chuk is built, and occupied the entire space intervening between that village and Kohuck, the hillocks adjoining which latter place were covered by large masses of footmen collected from the neighbouring villages to witness rather than to participate in the combat."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal*.]

broke and fled in dismay; and the humiliation of Atta Mahomed and his princely ally was complete.*

The Douranee chiefs now began to throw off the mask. They moved down to the assistance of the rebel army, but the battle had been fought before they could arrive upon the field, and they only came up in time to see their countrymen in panic flight.† Sufferd Jung, Atta Mahomed, and the other rebel chiefs found an honourable refuge in the Douranee camp; and from that time, they who had left Candahar as our friends, presented a front of open hostility to our authority.‡

Meerza Ahmed was the head-piece of the Douranee party. Nott had pronounced him a traitor.§ Rawlinson

* Major Rawlinson, in his despatch of the 6th of March, describes this affair as a "brief skirmish." General Nott has described the action in a few pregnant sentences. A graphic account of it is to be found in Captain Neill's *Recollections of Four Years' Service in the East*. Captain Neill was present as Adjutant of her Majesty's 40th Regiment. He speaks of the affair as the "Battle of Urgundab"—"the first success after our recent disasters at Caubul," as it was. He adds: "The victory having been obtained over a force so immensely superior to that which was opposed to it by the British, most effectually damped the spirit of our enemies in that part of the country." As Nott's force had sixteen guns, it can hardly be said that the enemy's force was immensely superior.

† The Prince seems to have been inclined to desert to the British in the course of the action. He and Tej Mahomed (the Sirdar of the recreant Janbazz, who had been forced to accompany the mutineers after their attack on their British officers) had been in consultation in the morning about going over to the British camp. The chiefs had some suspicion of this, and "when they saw Tej Mahomed detach himself, they immediately ac-

cused the Prince of treachery. They talked, indeed, of seizing him; upon which the boy, with his immediate followers, galloped off the field."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*] Tej Mahomed would have come in; but an inopportune shower of grape from Blood's battery kept him at a discreet distance.

‡ The Douranee chiefs were irritated against Atta Mahomed for precipitating the conflict with the British. They had been anxious to stand aloof until the issue of the Caubul contest could be more clearly seen by them. They were unwilling to commit themselves at so early a stage.

§ On the 8th of January the General wrote to Rawlinson: "I am sorry that I have not the same confidence in Meerza Ahmed which you appear to have. The force under this man has been in the immediate vicinity of Candahar for the last month. Why this has been permitted I know not. He has a very considerable body of men with him, both horse and foot; and my information tells me that they are increasing daily and hourly. . . . You ought to be the best judge of this man's fidelity; but I believe him to be a traitor; and I should not be surprised to hear of his

had now ceased to believe in his fidelity; but he had never ceased to respect his talents. He knew him to be an Afghan of rare ability, and he believed that the sagacity of the Meerza would not suffer him to doubt the difference between the power of his countrymen and that of the British Government. But the Meerza had sounded the depth of the difficulties which surrounded us with no little accuracy, and had estimated aright the nature of the crisis. He saw in the distance our compulsory abandonment of Afghanistan, and doubted the wisdom of leaguering himself with a declining cause.

From the 20th of January to the last day of February the Douranees remained encamped in the neighbourhood of Candahar. Nothing but the genius of Meerza Ahmed could have kept together, throughout so long a season of comparative inactivity, all the discordant elements of that Douranee force. The winter had set in with its snowy accessories. Nott was unwilling to expose his troops to the severities of the winter season; and the enemy seemed equally disinclined for war whilst the snow was on the ground. But during this period of suspended hostilities very different were the occupations of the two contending forces—very different the feelings with which they contemplated the renewal of the struggle. The attitude of the British at this time denoted a consciousness of strength. There was no despondency—there was no excitement. Our officers and men, having nothing to do in the field, fell back again into the ordinary routine of cantonment life, as though the country had never been convulsed or disturbed. They rode

being joined by his expected confederates, and before twenty-four hours marching off and forcing the young Prince Sekunder to accompany him. Yet he is on the watch, and will play his game according to circumstances.”
 —[General Nott to Major Rawlinson: January 8th, 1842. *MS. Correspondence.*] The position of Meerza Ahmed, and the near prospect of his defection, were among the reasons urged by the General in support of his refusal to quit the near neighbourhood of Candahar.

steeple-chases; they played at rackets; they pelted one another with snow-balls. The dreadful snow which had destroyed the Caubul army was only a plaything in the hands of their brethren at Candahar.* The enemy, on the other hand, were kept continually in a state of restless and absorbing activity. Meerza Ahmed saw the danger of suffering the Douranee chiefs, disunited and jealous of each other as they were, to dwell too intently upon the embarrassments of their own positions. He gave their thoughts an outward direction; and, by skilful management, kept them both from risking prematurely a general engagement with the British, and from breaking out into internal dissensions.† “Meerza Ahmed alone,” says Major Rawlinson, in the able despatch I have already quoted, “could have so long preserved union among the discordant elements of which this camp was composed; he alone could have managed, by the most careful revenue arrangements, to have supported the concourse which was assembled round the standard of Sufer Jung; he alone, perhaps, could have prevented the Douranees from risking an action in which they were sure to be defeated; his measures throughout have been most skilful and well sustained. The chiefs were, in the first place, sent to recruit in the different districts where their influence chiefly prevailed; revenue was raised in the usual form for the support of the troops in anticipation of the coming harvest, the ryots receiving an acquittance from Meerza Ahmed in case the management should continue in his hands, and

* *Neill's Recollections.* There was, however, comparatively little snow at Candahar; and it seldom lies there long upon the ground.

† He was not, however, completely successful. It would have been a miracle if he had been. “February 4.—There have been several squabbles in the Douranee camp already: 1stly. A quarrel took place

between the Janbaz and Populzyes regarding *bhoosa*; 2ndly. Sufer Jung fell out with Meerza Ahmed, and abused him for not spending his money freely on the Ghazees; and 3rdly. The Janbaz have regularly cleaned out an Ishakzye Khail in another dispute about supplies.”—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

being assured that if our power prevailed we were too just to subject the cultivators to a double exaction; statements of the Shah's connivance in the Caubul revolution were industriously circulated; incessant attempts were made to tamper with our Hindostanee troops (not altogether without success), and letters were designedly thrown into our hands to render us suspicious of such chiefs as adhered to us, whilst the most stringent measures were adopted to deter the villagers around the city from bringing supplies into Candahar. Such was the line of policy pursued by Meerza Ahmed from the 20th of January to the 20th of February. In this interim General Nott had laid in five months' supplies for the troops; he had repaired the fortifications to a certain extent; and intending on the 12th of February to march out and attack the enemy, he had concurred in the advisability of disarming the population preparatory to the movement of our troops.* Severe weather, however, rendered a march impracticable at the time he meditated; and before it became sufficiently mild to enable him to take the field, the tactics of the enemy had undergone a total alteration in consequence of advices from Caubul."

But there were many circumstances at this time to create uneasiness in the minds of those to whom was entrusted the direction of affairs at Candahar. The garrison was not threatened with a scarcity of provisions; but fodder for the cattle was very scarce. The horses were becoming unserviceable from lack of nourishment; the sheep were so miserably lean as to be scarcely worth killing for food. It was intensely cold; and fuel was so

* Major Rawlinson, preparatory to the commencement of the work of disarming, took a census of the inhabitants of the city, which greatly alarmed the people, as it was believed to be our intention to expel them. When it was found that they were only to be disarmed, they recovered their serenity, and submitted very patiently to the ordeal.

scarce, that the luxury of a winter fire was denied even to the sick. The hospitals had their inmates; but there were no medicines. And above all, money was becoming so scarce, that the most serious apprehensions were entertained by Major Rawlinson, who knew that there was no weapon of war so serviceable as the money-bag in such a country as Afghanistan.* Under such circumstances, it may readily be supposed how anxiously the arrival of a convoy from the southward was looked for, and how necessary it seemed that the communications with Sindh should be opened in such a manner as to secure the arrival of treasure and supplies.

But whilst the hopes of the garrison were directed towards the country to the southward, their thoughts, with fear and trembling, turned themselves towards the North. On the 21st of February a messenger arrived at Candahar, bringing a letter from General Elphinstone and Major Pottinger, ordering the evacuation of Candahar and Khelat-i-Ghilzye.† The original had been

* "February 11.—I am becoming seriously alarmed about money. A lakh is the utmost that I shall be able to raise from the Candahar merchants, and with the most rigid economy this will hardly last us to the end of March—the godowns at the same time being opened to supply the troops. It seems, therefore, absolutely indispensable that the road should be opened from the south, either by Outram or ourselves."—[Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.]

† "February 21.—Two Cossids reached me to-day from Lecch, one with letters of the 13th and 15th, the other with letters of the 17th. Enclosed was a copy of a letter addressed to me by Major-General Elphinstone and Major Pottinger, requesting me to intimate to Major-General Nott their wish that he would

evacuate Candahar and Khelat-i-Ghilzye, in pursuance of the agreement entered into at Caubul for the return of our troops to India. This letter appears to be genuine, but I cannot consider it in any way binding on us; and for the reasons stated in my letter to General Nott of the 1st instant, I still conceive that we are best consulting the interests of government in maintaining our position pending the receipt of further instructions from Calcutta. . . . The question regarding Shah Soojah is very perplexing. He is certainly nominally at the head of the government, and we can no longer be supposed to be here in support of his authority. Still, however, a month sooner or later in retiring can make little difference, and it seems to me indispensable that some definite ar-

written nearly two months before; and that which now reached Major Rawlinson was a copy forwarded by Leech from Khelat-i-Ghilzye.* There was no doubt in Rawlinson's mind about the genuine character of the document; but he could not bring himself to recognise for a moment the obligations which it was intended to impose upon him. He could not, however, help perceiving that the turn which political affairs had taken in Caubul placed him in a strange and anomalous position. Shah Soojah was now the recognised sovereign of Afghanistan, ruling by the consent and with the aid of the Barukzye chiefs; and it could no longer be said that the presence of the British troops was necessary to the support of the Suddozye Kings. The Douranee chiefs saw this as plainly as Rawlinson; and they did not fail to take advantage of the circumstance. They now endeavoured to reason the British out of Candahar when they found it difficult to expel them; and Rawlinson and Nott found it less easy to rebut their arguments than to repel their assaults.

On the 23rd of February, Rawlinson received a packet of letters from the Douranee camp, the contents of which supplied much food for earnest reflection. Sudfer Jung

rangements, approved of by government, should be entered into for the future administration of the province before we withdraw our troops."—[*Major Rawlinson's M.S. Journal.*]

* It ran thus: "*Caubul, 25th December, 1841.*—SIR,—It having been found necessary to conclude an arrangement, founded on that of the late Sir W. H. Macnaghten, for the evacuation of Afghanistan by our troops, we have the honour to request that you will intimate to the officer commanding at Candahar our wish that the troops now at that place and at Khelat-i-Ghilzye, together with the British authorities and troops

within your jurisdiction, should return to India at the earliest convenient season. Newab Jubbar Khan, who is the bearer of this letter, will render you all the assistance in his power. He has been appointed Governor of Candahar on the part of the existing government.

"E. POTTINGER.

"W. K. ELPHINSTONE, M.-G.

"P.S.—If you require two or three days to make your preparations, you must not remain in the city, but proceed to your cantonment. Whatever you are obliged to leave behind, you will make over to the Newab Jubbar Khan."

and the Douranee chiefs wrote to the British agent, setting forth that, as it had always been declared that the British merely occupied the country in support of Shah Soojah, and as the Shah was now recognised by the chiefs and the people, and had no longer any need of our support, it was incumbent upon us to withdraw from the country. If, it was added, the British would now consent to retire from Candahar, an unmolested passage to Quettah would be guaranteed to them; but that, if they insisted on maintaining their position, they must expect that the fate of the Caubul army would be theirs. Meerza Ahmed, in a private letter to Rawlinson, besought him to retire before the whole Douranee nation rose against the British. But perhaps the most important of the letters brought in that morning, was one from Shah Soojah to Prince Timour, to the following effect: "You must understand that the disturbances which you have, no doubt, heard of at Caubul, have been a contest between the followers of Islam and the unbelievers. Now that the affair is decided, all the Afghans have tendered their allegiance to me, and recognised me as King. It is necessary that you should keep me duly informed of all proceedings in your government; and rest assured of my favour and affection." When Rawlinson took this letter to the Shah-zadah Timour, the Prince at once declared it to be a forgery; but the British officer knew how to decypher stranger characters than those of a Persian *Dust-Khut*, and to decide upon the authenticity of far more perplexing scriptures than this. Rawlinson's practised eye saw at once that the document was a genuine one.

The letter from the chiefs demanded an answer; and Rawlinson now took counsel with the General. The hour for decision had arrived. It became them to look their position boldly in the face, and to shape their

course for the future. Nott was not a man to listen patiently to the language of insolent dictation from the Afghan chiefs. He had already made up his mind to maintain his position at all risks, pending the receipt of instructions from government issued subsequently to the receipt by government of intelligence of the Envoy's murder.* Rawlinson was of the same opinion. So he drew up a letter to the Douranee chiefs, setting forth that, as there was every reason to believe that Shah Soojah was acting under compulsion, and that he in reality, in spite of existing appearances, desired the support of the British, it would not become the latter to withdraw from Afghanistan before entering into a final explanation with the King. He drew the attention of the chiefs to the difference of our positions at Caubul and Candahar—said that any attempt to expel us by force must inevitably fail—and recommended the Douranees to refrain from engaging in unprofitable hostility. But he added, that the British had no desire to conquer the country for themselves—that the Candahar army was only waiting for instructions from government—and he believed it was the desire of that government to restore to Shah Soojah the uncontrolled exercise of his authority, and to be guided by the provisions of a new treaty which would probably be negotiated between the two states.† On the following day,‡ the despatch of the letter having been delayed by the difficulty of finding a trustworthy messenger, Rawlinson

* "I have only to repeat," wrote General Nott, on the 23rd of February, in reply to Major Rawlinson's official letter on the subject of the evacuation orders received from Caubul, "that I will not treat with any person whatever for the retirement of the British troops from Afghanistan, until I shall have received instructions from the Supreme Go-

vernment. The letter signed 'Eldred Pottinger' and 'W. K. Elphinstone' may, or may not, be a forgery. I conceive that these officers were not free agents at Caubul; and therefore their letter or order can have no weight with me."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

‡ February 28.

added a postscript, setting forth that intelligence had since been received, which clearly demonstrated that the Shah was little more than a prisoner in the hands of the Barukzyes; and he added, that forces were on their way from India to avenge the murder of the Envoy.

The activity of Rawlinson, at this time, was unceasing. He exerted himself, and often with good success, to detach different tribes from the rebel cause; and was continually corresponding both with the chiefs in the Douranee camp and in the neighbouring villages. It was his policy to draw off the Barukzyes from the Douranee confederacy, and to stimulate the Douranees against the Barukzyes, by declaring that the Shah was a mere instrument in the hands of the latter. It was debated, indeed, whether the Douranees could not be induced to move off to Caubul for the rescue of the King.*

But, in spite of these and other favorable indications, it appeared, both to the military and political chief at Candahar, that it was necessary now to strike some vigorous blow for the suppression of the insurrection and the maintenance of our own security. So Nott determined to attack the enemy; and Rawlinson, after many misgivings, to expel the Afghans from the city. This movement he had been painfully contemplating all

* "I have been for some days past in communication with the Barukzye tribe, and have, I believe, succeeded in detaching them from the Douranee confederacy. They had deserted their villages and gone off to the desert; but, on a promise of protection, have now returned, and bound themselves to admit none of the enemy's horse within their borders. The Alekozyes of the Urghundab also propose to enter into the same engagements; and if we can fairly detach these two powerful tribes, the Douranee cause

must, I should think, expire of an atrophy. . . . Timour suggests that he should endeavour to get the Douranee chiefs to march on Caubul, in order to release the Shah from the Barukzyes, feigning that he has received his father's instructions to this effect; and I see no objection to such an attempt being made. I also hear that the Caubul Janbaz insist on proceeding to the north, and that Meerza Ahmed has the greatest difficulty in restraining them."—[Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.]

through the month of February; and now, at the beginning of March, he believed that he could no longer postpone, with safety, the accomplishment of this harsh, but necessary, measure of defence.* All doubts regarding the wishes of the Indian Government had been, by this time, set at rest by the receipt of a copy of a letter, addressed by the Supreme Government to the Commander-in-Chief on the 28th of January, in which letter the continued occupation of Candahar was spoken of as an event which the British-Indian Government believed would be conducive to the interests of the state; and it afforded no small pleasure to Nott and Rawlinson to find how completely they had anticipated the wishes of the Governor-General and his Council.

On the 3rd of March, Rawlinson began to clear the city of its Afghan inhabitants.† Inspecting the census he had made, and selecting a few who were to be permitted

* "*March 1.*—The General now has made up his mind to take the field; and, after considering the case fully, I have determined that the Afghans must be turned out of the city. It is not as if the present affair were a mere transient disturbance. We are engaged in a regular national war, and Outram does not anticipate that we shall be able to take the field in sufficient force to put down all opposition before next winter. We must, therefore, look forward to a protracted struggle at Candahar all through the summer; and the security of the city appears to me, under such circumstances, indispensable."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

† A week before, a strong conviction of the necessity of the measure had forced itself upon his mind. But he was only too willing to postpone the execution of it. On the 22nd of February he wrote: "The Moollahs are now again stirring themselves, and I have very good grounds for supposing a large quantity of arms

to be concealed. I almost fear that affairs are approaching that state when, for our immediate safety, we shall be obliged to incur the odium of expelling the Moollahs and Afghans from the city. It is not that these people can do us any serious injury within the city; but the probability of an insurrection inside the walls simultaneously with the disturbances outside, gives confidence to Meerza Ahmed's party and dispirits our Parsewan adherents. It is to be considered, however, that if we expel the Afghans and retain the Parsewans, we shall embitter the national feeling against us with the rumour of sectarian animosity, and shall, moreover, sacrifice the Sheeah party in the event of our retirement. The most obvious necessity of self-preservation could alone, I think, warrant such a course, and I cannot doubt but that it is my duty to temporise as long as prudence will admit."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

to remain—peaceful citizens, as merchants, followers of useful trades, and a few members of the priesthood, he expelled the remainder of the Afghan inhabitants—in all, about 1000 families. No resistance was offered. The work was not completed before the close of the 6th. The municipal authorities performed their duties so remissly, that it was necessary to tell off an officer and a party of Sepoys to each district, to see that the clearance was more effectually performed. Some 5000 or 6000 people were driven out of the city. Every exertion was made to render the measure as little oppressive as possible; but the expulsion of so many citizens from their homes could not be altogether free from cruelty and injustice.*

The city having thus been cleared of all its suspected inhabitants, Nott, on the 7th of March, took the field, with the main body of his troops. The 40th Queen's—the 16th, 38th, 42nd, and 43rd regiments of Native Infantry—a wing of one of the Shah's regiments—all the cavalry in the force, and sixteen guns, went out against the enemy. The 2nd regiment of Native Infantry, with two regiments and a wing of the Shah's foot, remained behind for the protection of the city. All the gates of the city, but the Herat and a part of the Shikarpoor gate, were blocked up, and Candahar was believed to be secure against the assaults of the whole Douranee force.

As Nott advanced, the enemy, who had been hovering about the neighbourhood of Candahar, retired before him. He crossed the Turnuk and advanced upon the

* "No doubt much property has been sacrificed in carrying the measure into effect; but we have done all in our power to alleviate the evil. Valuable property, which the people were unable to take away with them, has been transferred to the safe keeping of the Hindoos and merchants who have remained, and the grain is to be all taken charge of by the commissariat, receipts in money being granted by us to the owners."—*[Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.]*

Urghundab in pursuit of them; but they shrank from meeting our bayonets; and it was long before they even ventured to come within reach of our guns. The artillery then told with such good effect on the dense masses of the enemy, that they were more than ever disinclined to approach us. On the 9th, however, there seemed some prospect of a general action. The enemy's footmen were posted on a range of hills, and, as our column advanced, they saluted us with a volley from their matchlocks. The light companies of the 40th Queen's and 16th Native Infantry, under Captain F. White, of the former regiment, were sent forward to storm the hills on the right; and the grenadiers of the 40th, under Lieutenant Wakefield, performed the same good service on the ascents to the left. The hills were soon cleared; and the enemy's cavalry were then seen drawn up in front of our columns. Their line extended across the plain; their right resting upon a range of high ground, and their left on a ruined fort, built on a high scarped mound.* Hoping to draw them within his reach, the General now kept his guns quiet. But they were not inclined to meet us in the field. They were planning another game.

Whether it had been the original design of the Douranee chiefs to draw Nott's army out of Candahar, and to strip the city of its defences; or whether, despairing of success against such a body of troops as the General had taken out with him, was not at first very apparent.† But it subsequently became known to the British authorities that the stratagem was planned by the

* *Captain Neill's Recollections of Service in the East.*

† "The plan of enticing the General to Telookham, delaying him there by keeping a body of horse in his vicinity, and then doubling back on

the town, was all preconcerted by Meerza Ahmed; and on the night of the attack every chief in the country was present except the Noorzys."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

subtle understanding of Meerza Ahmed. The enemy, after the skirmish of the 9th instant, retired before our advancing battalions, and, industriously spreading a report that they purposed to attack Nott's camp during the night, recrossed the river and doubled back upon Candahar. Up to this time the city had remained perfectly quiet; and the minds of the British authorities had not been disturbed by any thoughts of coming danger. But on the morning of the 10th it was seen that a number of Afghan footmen had come down during the preceding night and taken possession of old Candahar. Rawlinson at once despatched three messengers to Nott's camp, to inform him that the enemy had doubled back in his rear, and that it was apparently their intention to attack the city. His suspicions were soon confirmed. His scouts brought in intelligence to the effect that the Douranee army was to concentrate during the day, before Candahar, and to attack it in the course of the night. All day long the numbers of the enemy continued to increase, and at sunset Sufder Jung and Meerza Ahmed arrived and posted themselves in the cantonments. Night came on with pitchy darkness; and the garrison could not trace the movements of the enemy. They had no blue lights—no fire-balls—no means of casting a light beyond the defences of the city. The Ghazees were swarming close to the walls; and at eight o'clock they commenced the attack. They had heaped up some faggots at the Herat gate; and now they fired the pile. They had poured oil on the brushwood, and now it blazed up with sudden fury.* The

* The gate had been closed for the night. Lieutenant Cooke was on guard, and was endeavouring to trace the movements of the enemy in the distance, when a villager drove his donkey, loaded with brushwood, over the bridge and demanded admission. He was told the gate would be opened

for no one; upon which he growled out a malediction, and tossing the brushwood on the ground, said he would leave it there for the night, and take it into the town in the morning. The villager, having recrossed the bridge with his donkey, dived among the ruined huts opposite

gate itself ignited as readily as tinder, and the flames now lit up the mass of white turbans, the gleaming arms, and the coloured standards, which had before been only seen, in scattered glimpses, by the momentary light of the kindled match of the Afghan jezails.*

Desperate was the attack of the Ghazees, and steady the resistance of the garrison. A gun upon the bastion poured in its deadly shower of grape among the besiegers; and the guard kept up a heavy fire from the ramparts. But the Ghazees pressed on with desperate resolution. The success of their first movement had given them confidence and courage; and now they were tearing down the blazing planks with intrepid hands, fearless of the red-hot bars and hinges of the falling gate. Many of them, intoxicated with bang, were sending up the fearful yell of the Afghan fanatic, and rushing upon death with the eagerness of the martyr. Others were calling upon Prince Timour to come out and win Paradise by aiding the cause of the true believers. At one time it seemed that victory would declare itself on the side of the infuriated multitude that was surging round the city walls. But there were men within the city as resolute, and far more steady and collected in their resolution, than the excited crowds beyond it, who were hungering after our destruction. Major Lane commanded the garrison. Rawlinson was there to counsel and to aid him. They brought down the gun from the bastion and planted it in the gateway. They brought another from the citadel to its support. They strengthened the point of attack with fresh bodies of infantry, and called out all the water-carriers to endeavour to extinguish the flames.

the Herat gate, and was out of shot in a moment. At the same instant flames burst forth from the brushwood, and the gate was fired.

* See the letter-press to Lieut. Rattray's admirable drawings of the Scenery and Costumes of Afghanistan.

But more serviceable even than these movements was one which opposed a solid obstacle to the entrance of the besieging multitude. They brought down from the Commissariat godowns a number of grain-bags, and piled them up at the burning gate. About nine o'clock the gate fell outwards, and then a party of Ghazees climbed the lofty barricade of grain-bags as men weary of their lives. Many fell dead or desperately wounded beneath the heavy fire of our musketry. Spirited was the attack—spirited the defence. The fate of Candahar seemed to tremble in the balance. For three more hours the Ghazees renewed, at intervals, the assault upon the gateway; but they could not make good their entrance to the city; and at midnight they drew off in despair.

Whilst this desperate struggle was going on at the Herat gate of the city, attempts had been made upon the Shikarpoor and Caubul gates. But the enemy could not fire the brushwood they had collected. The garrison were too prompt and alert. It appears that Meerza Ahmed, confident of the success of the attack upon the Herat gate, had arranged that a given signal should announce this success, and that then he should proceed to the assault of the Eedgah gate leading to the citadel. But when at midnight the attack was finally repulsed, a council of war was held. Baffled in their attempts on the city, the angry fanatics levelled the most violent reproaches against Meerza Ahmed, and were with difficulty restrained from laying violent hands on the man, who, they declared, had betrayed them into an attempt which had sacrificed the lives of hundreds of true believers, and ended only in failure and disgrace. It is said that the Ghazees lost six hundred men in the attempt. They were busy until day-break in carrying off the dead.

It is not to be doubted that, during that night of the 10th of March, Candahar was in imminent danger. Had the city fallen into the hands of the enemy at this time, it is doubtful whether Nott's force, on its return, would have succeeded in recapturing it. The troops had gone out without tents, and were insufficiently supplied with ammunition. Everything, indeed, was against them; and even if the courage and constancy of the force had prevailed at last, success could have been achieved only after an immense sacrifice of life. That the General was out-manceuvred, is plain. But it may be doubted whether he is fairly chargeable with the amount of indiscretion which has been imputed to him. It has been said that he left the city unprotected. But as he was to have engaged the enemy himself in the open country, and all sources of internal danger had been removed by the expulsion of the Afghans and the disarming of the other inhabitants, it was confidently believed that the troops left in the city were more than sufficient for its defence. It must, however, be acknowledged that Nott was lamentably ignorant of the movements of the enemy, who doubled back in his rear without raising a suspicion of their designs in the British camp. But this is no new thing in Indian warfare. To be ignorant of the intentions of the enemy is the rule, not the exception, of Indian generalship. Our intelligence-department is always so miserably defective, that we lose the enemy often as suddenly as we find him, and are either running ourselves unexpectedly upon him, or suffering him to slip out of our hands.

General Nott re-entered Candahar on the 12th of March. The repulse which the insurgents had received at the city gate gave a heavy blow to their cause. It brought disunion into the Dourance camp, and made the Ghazees denounce the chiefs who had plunged them

into disaster, and resolve to forswear the perilous trade of fanaticism which brought so much suffering upon them. The ryots, who had joined the standard of the true believers, now returned in numbers to their peaceful avocations; and Major Rawlinson exerted himself to the utmost to reassure the public mind, and restore peace and prosperity to the surrounding villages.* As the month advanced there were many encouraging signs of the approaching dissolution of the Douranee camp. Some of its components were already talking of moving off to Caubul; and it was said that Meerza Ahmed had sent his family to the capital preparatory to a retreat in that direction himself.

But there is never anything sustained and consistent in Afghan politics. The appearances of to-day differ from the appearances of yesterday, and are again succeeded by different symptoms to-morrow. The Douranee chiefs at one time seemed to be on the point of a general disruption; and then, after the lapse of a few days, they met in council, and cooling down under a shower of mutual reproaches, swore solemn oaths to be true to each other, and to league themselves together for another attack upon the Feringhees. At the end of the third week of March they were again upon the move. Upon the 24th, they were within a short distance of Killa-chuk, where Nott had attacked them before. On this day the Parsewan Janbaz attempted to renew certain negotiations which they had initiated a few days before; but which had been coldly received. They offered to quit the Douranee camp and to move off to Caubul, if a month's pay were given them to defray

* The Ghazees had so damaged the canal banks, that the irrigation was destroyed, and there was every prospect of a failure of the crops; but through Rawlinson's agency the people of the Urghundab were induced to labour at their repair, and in a short time the waters began again to flow in their accustomed course.

their expenses on the march. But Nott indignantly rejected the proposal. "I will never give them," he wrote to Rawlinson, "one rupee; and if I can ever get near them I will destroy them to a man. It is my wish that no communications shall be held with them. They have murdered our people, and plundered the country."*

On the following day, our troops again encountered the enemy in the field. A brigade under Colonel Wymer had been sent out, partly to clear the country on the Candahar side of the Urghundab from the Douranee horse, who were threatening our position, and partly to relieve the garrison, which was straitened for forage, by sending out the camels to graze in the open country. Wymer took with him three regiments of infantry, a troop of horse artillery, and a party of some four hundred mounted men. In the neighbourhood of Baba-Wallee the Douranee horse crossed the river—3000 strong—to attack him. Having sent a messenger to Candahar to inform the General of his position, Wymer prepared to defend himself. He had to guard his cattle as well as to fight the enemy; and the former necessity greatly crippled his movements. Weak, as the Candahar detachments always were, in the mounted branch, he found himself at a disadvantage opposed to the large bodies of the enemy's horse, who now appeared in his front. Our Hindostanee cavalry were driven in by the Douranees under Saloo Khan, who gallantly charged our squares.† But the fire of our guns and the volleys

* *General Nott to Major Rawlinson: March 25, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

† "In the charge of the horse under Saloo Khan, when after driving back our cavalry they were stopped by the fire of the guns and the light company of the 38th, which had been thrown out in advance, Yar Mahomed of Dehrawat, who was Saloo's

nephew, fell, and in another part of the field, Hubeeb-oollah, Akhondzadeh, and Mahomed Raheen, Noorzey, were wounded. The total loss of the enemy in killed and wounded I estimate, from all I could learn on the field and from the villagers, at about 150. We had a few men killed and some forty wounded. Amongst

of our musketry soon checked the audacity of the Afghan horsemen; and the affair became one of distant skirmishes. But, in the mean while, the roar of our artillery had been distinctly heard at Candahar, and Nott had moved out to the support of Wymer's brigade. The Douranees were still surrounding our camp, when the General, with the reinforcing brigade, entered the valley. What the men who followed Nott then saw, is described as "a beautiful spectacle," which will not readily be forgotten.* The bright afternoon sun shed its slant rays upon the sabres of the enemy, and lit them up like a burning forest. Our infantry were drawn up in a hollow square covering a crowd of camels; the horse-artillery guns, which had done such good service before, were playing gloriously, under Turner's direction, upon the dense bodies of the enemy's horse, whom their heavy fire kept at a cautious distance. "And just as General Nott," adds an eye-witness,† "with the reinforcements came in sight, Lieutenant Chamberlaine, of the Bengal service, an officer in the Shah's cavalry, who at the head of a small party had charged the enemy, was driven back, and, emerging from a cloud of dust, formed in rear of the infantry, with the loss of a few men killed, himself and many of his party wounded—but not without having given very satisfactory proofs of his power as a swordsman, albeit his treacherous weapon had broken in his hand." As our

the latter are two cavalry officers, Chamberlaine, and Travers of the 2nd. The Douranee horse came on more boldly on this occasion than they had ever been seen to do before. Some of the 38th Sepoys, indeed, received sabre-cuts from our horsemen; but they cannot stand our artillery or musketry fire. They had been so taunted with cowardice, that they resolved to have one conflict with us

before they quitted the vicinity of Candahar, and had not reinforcements gone out, they would have sustained, I doubt not, a much heavier loss, by making repeated charges on different parts of the camp during the afternoon."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

* Captain Neill's *Recollections of Service.*

† Captain Neill.

reinforcing regiments approached, the enemy retired; and our cavalry were quite useless.* The Douranee camp had been left standing, and Nott, though the day was far advanced, was eager to cross the river and attack it; but the guns could not be brought down to the bank without great labour, and the fords were well-nigh impracticable. So Nott determined to withdraw the brigade to Candahar for the night, leaving Wymer in position, and to return on the following morning to disperse the Douranee horse.

On the morning of the 26th Nott went out again, with the brigade that had accompanied him on the preceding day, to the banks of the Urghundab; but the enemy had struck their camp during the night; and as soon as day broke, the Douranee horse had moved off and dispersed themselves in different bodies. So the General returned to Candahar; and Colonel Wymer remained in the valley to graze his cattle, unmolested and secure. Rawlinson remained in the valley throughout the day, "visiting the different villages, conversing with the Moollahs and head-men, and endeavouring to restore confidence. Imprecations against the Ghazees were general in every village, and the damage which had been caused by their depredations was evidently very great."†

The result of this affair was a growth of fresh disunion in the Douranee camp. The chiefs accused each other of cowardice, and all assailed Meerza Ahmed with measureless abuse. But tidings were now coming in,

* "A few squadrons of dragoons," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "would have swept the Douranee horse from the field; as it was, they were permitted to re-cross the river almost unmolested."

† *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.* Rawlinson adds: "Our own camp-

followers, I also found, had committed extensive ravages; and when I endeavoured to persuade the people that our troops were there for their protection, they uniformly answered that they knew not whether they had most to fear from their friends or their enemies."

both from the north and the south, which went some way to comfort and reassure them. It was currently reported in their camp that Ghuznee had capitulated. This intelligence had been received some days before by the British officers at Candahar, and had not been disbelieved. On the 31st of March, a letter from Major Leech, at Kelat-i-Ghilzye, was received by Nott at Candahar, and though it announced the fall of Ghuznee only on native authority, it seemed to divest the fact entirely of all atmosphere of doubt. It appeared, from the statements that reached Candahar, that Ghuznee had been invested by an overwhelming force, and that, after holding out for some weeks, the garrison had been reduced more by a want of water than by the attacks of the enemy. It was reported, that before the arrival of orders from Caubul for the evacuation of the place, the town of Ghuznee had been taken by the surrounding tribes—"that the Hindoos of the Bazaar were all killed, fighting on our side—that Palmer, during the two months he was in the Balla Hissar, paid a daily sum for his provisions, water, and wood—that Shumshooden was the bearer of orders from the British at Caubul to give up the fortress—that the failure of water was the reason that made him agree to vacate the upper citadel on the 8th instant—that the mass of Ghazees did not respect the treaty formed, with a guarantee given to Palmer by Shumshooden, but attacked our garrison, and they only 400 strong, on their leaving the citadel, killing 100 and losing many themselves—that Palmer now wanted a guarantee for the safety of the officers, and that this being given, they surrendered themselves with two or three European females."* At the same time, Leech reported that he was in possession of a letter, bearing the seal of Shumshooden Khan,

* *Major Leech to General Nott : Kelat-i-Ghilzye, March 9, 1842. MS.*

and addressed to the Shamalzye chiefs, exhorting them to assemble and march on Khelat-i-Ghilzye, and holding out to them hopes of honour and wealth to be conferred upon them by the King and Ameen-oollah Khan, if they succeeded in capturing the place; and promising himself, upon the breaking up of the snow, to march down upon it "with fort-destroying guns and an army crowned with victory."

The tidings of the fall of Ghuznee were most calamitously true. The fortress, which the English had taken with so much difficulty, and the capture of which had been proclaimed with so much pomp, was now in the hands of the enemy. The slight outline of the melancholy events which had ended in the destruction of the garrison and the captivity of the surviving officers, which Leech had sent from Khelat-i-Ghilzye, was substantially correct. The enemy appeared before Ghuznee on the 20th of November. On the same day snow began to fall. Maclaren's brigade was then advancing from Candahar, and the enemy, expecting its appearance in their neighbourhood, drew off their investing force; but they soon re-appeared again. Maclaren's retirement gave them new heart; and on the 7th of December they collected again, in increased numbers, around the walls. The garrison were now completely enlaced. The city was in their possession, but they could not stir beyond it. Soon, however, they lost even that. The inhabitants undermined the walls, and admitted the enemy from without. On the 16th of December, through the subterranean aperture which the townspeople had made, the enemy streamed in by thousands. The city was now no longer tenable. The garrison shut themselves up in the citadel.

The winter now set in with appalling severity. The Sepoys, kept constantly on the alert, sunk beneath the

paralysing cold. Bravely as they tried to bear up against it, the trial was beyond their physical capacity to endure. The deep snow was lying on the ground; it was often falling heavily when the Sepoys were on their cold night-watch. The mercury in the thermometer had fallen many degrees below zero. Men, who had spent all their lives on the burning plains of Hindostan, and drunk their tepid water out of vessels scorched by the fierce rays of the Indian sun, were now compelled to break the ice in the wells before they could allay their thirst. Fuel was so scarce, that a single seer* of wood was all that each man received in the day to cook his dinner and keep off the assaults of the mysterious enemy that was destroying them. They were on half-rations; and the scanty provisions that were served out to them were of such a quality that only severe hunger could reconcile them to it. Numbers of them were carried into hospital miserably frost-bitten. The northern climate was doing its work.

The Afghans, in the mean while, in possession of the city, continued to harass the garrison in the citadel, by firing upon them whenever they showed their heads above the walls. This continued till the middle of the month of January, when, it appears, that some suspension of hostilities supervened. It was believed that the English at Caubul had entered into a treaty with the Afghan Sirdars; and that Shumshoodeen Khan would shortly arrive with orders from the existing government to assume possession of the place. Weeks, however, passed away, and the new governor did not make his appearance.† About the middle of February he arrived, and summoned Palmer to surrender. Unwilling to submit to the humiliating demand, and yet hopeless of the

* Two pounds.

† Shah Soojah claimed credit for having delayed his march.

efficacy of resistance, the English officer contrived to amuse the Sirdar until the beginning of March. Then the patience of Shumshoodeen Khan and the other chiefs was exhausted; and they swore that they would re-commence hostilities with unsparing ferocity if the citadel were not instantly surrendered. So, on the 6th of March, Palmer and his men marched out of the citadel. The enemy had solemnly sworn to conduct them in safety to Peshawur, with their colours, arms, and baggage, and fifty rounds of ammunition in the pouches of each of our fighting men.*

But it soon became only too miserably apparent that the enemy had sworn falsely to protect Palmer and his men. The British troops had scarcely taken up their abode in the quarter of the town which had been assigned to them, when the Afghan chiefs threw off the mask. On the day after their departure from the citadel, when the Sepoys were cooking their dinner, the Ghazees rushed with sudden fury on their lines. Three days of terror followed. House after house in which the English officers and their suffering Hindostanee followers endeavoured manfully to defend themselves, was attacked by the infuriated enemy. Fire, famine, and slaughter were all working together to destroy our unhappy men. At last, on the morning of the 20th, the survivors were huddled together in two houses which had been assigned to the head-quarters of the force—soldiers and camp-followers, men, women, and children, crammed to suffocation in every room, all hourly expecting death. The enemy were swarming around. The citadel guns, which had been useless in our hands, but were now most

* Palmer reported that want of water had driven him to surrender; but it is believed that he might have retained possession of the great well by running a covered way down the mound. Among the officers of Nott's army the loss of Ghuznee was considered even less creditable than the loss of Caubul.

effective in those of the enemy, were sending their round-shot "crashing through and through the walls."* Hour after hour, and still the enemy seemed to pause, as though unwilling to shorten, by a last annihilating attack, the sufferings of their victims.† But Shumshooden Khan had begun to relent. He was in council with the other Sirdars; and it was determined that the wretched men, who were now so wholly at their mercy, should be admitted to terms. The Ghazees were still crying aloud for their blood. But the chiefs assured the officers of their safety, if they would lay down their arms and place themselves in their hands. The Sepoys had by this time thrown off all authority, and determined to make their own way to Peshawur.‡ So the British officers, under a solemn

* If there had been any one in Ghuznee acquainted with the use and practice of artillery, the garrison might have held out till April.

† "On the morning of the 10th Poett and Davis were obliged to retire from their posts, and the survivors here now assembled in the two houses held by Colonel Palmer and the head-quarters of the corps. You cannot picture to yourself the scene these two houses presented; every room was crammed not only with Sepoys, but camp-followers, men, women, and children, and it is astonishing the slaughter among them was not greater, seeing that the guns of the citadel sent round-shot crashing through and through the walls. I saw high-caste men groping in the mud, endeavouring to discover pieces of unmelted ice, that by sucking them they might relieve the thirst that tormented them. Certainly, when that morning dawned, I thought it was the last I should see on this earth, and so did we all, and proceeded to make a few little arrangements ere the final attack on us took place. The regimental colours were burned, to prevent their falling into the hands

of the enemy; I destroyed my watch, and flung it, and what money I had, over the wall of the ditch; I also burnt my poor wife's miniature, first cramming the gold frame of it into a musket, being determined that one of the Ghazees should have his bellyful of gold ere I died. Hour after hour passed on, and still we sat expecting every minute to hear the shout of the final attack; but it came not. From our loopholes we saw the enemy swarming all around us—in every lane and house, and on the hill of the citadel—the place was black with their masses; and as they themselves afterwards told us, there were not less than ten thousand men thirsting for our blood."—[Lieutenant Crawford's Narrative.]

‡ Lieutenant Crawford says:—"During the three preceding days' fighting, Shumshooden had repeatedly offered us terms; but they were such as we could not accede to, inasmuch as they commenced by desiring we would surrender ourselves to him and abandon the Sepoys to the fury of the Ghazees. The Sepoys, it appears, had held a consultation among themselves, and believ-

oath from the chiefs that they should be honourably treated and conducted in safety to Caubul, laid down their arms, and trusted to the good faith of the Afghan Sirdars.* The Sepoys, in the mean while, were endeavouring to prosecute their insane scheme of escaping across the open country to Peshawur. Snow began to fall heavily. They wandered about the fields helpless and bewildered. Many of them were cut down or made prisoners by the enemy; and to all who survived, officers and men alike, a time of suffering now commenced, all the circumstances of which are burnt into the memories of men as with a brand of iron.

In the mean while, Khelat-i-Ghilzyc was gallantly holding out against the enemy. Situated between Ghuznee and Candahar, about eighty miles from the latter city, this isolated fortress stands upon a barren eminence, exposed to the wintry winds and driving dust-storms — one of the dreariest and bleakest spots in all the country of Afghanistan. It had been originally garrisoned by the Shah's 3rd infantry regiment, a party of forty European artillerymen, and some sappers and miners; but Maclaren's brigade, on its return towards Candahar, had dropped some 250 Sepoys of the 43rd Regiment at Khelat-i-Ghilzyc to strengthen the garrison; and now, commanded by Captain Craigie, of the Shah's service, this little party prepared to resist the assaults of the investing enemy and the cruel cold. For months the cold was far more irresistible than the

ing they had no chance of their lives, determined on forcing their way out of the town and endeavour to get to Peshawur. When we first heard of this mad design and spoke to the men about it, they denied it; but, on the 10th, two Native officers came forward and told us they had made up their minds to go off that night—that if we chose to accompany them they would be exceedingly glad, but, if otherwise, they would go alone."

* It is pleasant to record any act of individual heroism. "Nicholson, then quite a stripling, when the enemy entered Ghuznee, drove them thrice back beyond the walls at the point of the bayonet before he would listen to the order given him to make his company lay down their arms. He at length obeyed, gave up his sword with bitter tears, and accompanied his comrades to an almost hopeless imprisonment."—[Rattray.]

enemy. In that bleak, exposed situation, the icy winds were continually blowing from the north. "The lower the temperature sunk, the higher blew the north wind." The barracks were unfinished; there were neither doors nor windows to keep out the chilling blasts; and there was a scanty supply of firewood in store. How the Hindostanee soldiers bore up against it, it is difficult to say, for the European officers declare that they "never experienced a winter so continuously cold." There was an abundance of grain in store; but all the surrounding country was against them, and the wheat could not be ground. After more than two months of ineffectual labour they at last constructed serviceable hand-mills. The Europeans often lived for days together upon bread and water; but not a murmur arose. The winter passed wearily away. The enemy were inactive. But with spring came a renewal of active work on either side. The garrison were labouring to strengthen their defences, and the enemy, as the year advanced, began to draw more closely round the fortress, their numbers and their boldness increasing together. After a time, they began to dig trenches round the place, and, covered by the loopholed parapets, to keep up a hot fire upon the garrison, which it was impossible to return with good effect. But Craigie and his men had no thought of surrender. They held out, cheerfully and uncomplainingly, thankful if they could get a shot at the enemy when the parties in the trenches were being relieved.

Such was the condition of the garrisons of Ghuznee and Kelat-i-Ghilzye when disastrous intelligence from the southward reached Nott and Rawlinson at Candahar. They had been, for some time, looking forward with the greatest anxiety to the arrival of a convoy from Sindh, which was to throw treasure, ammunition, hospital stores, and other necessities into the garrison,

and increase the number of their available troops. Brigadier England, who commanded the Sindh field force, was at Dadur towards the close of February, and there he received instructions to move on through the Bolan Pass, to assemble a strong body of troops at Quettah, and thence to push his succours through the Kojuck with all expedient despatch. Major Outram was then in Sindh, earnest amongst the earnest to retrieve our lost position in Afghanistan, and active amongst the active to carry out the work of throwing troops into the country which had witnessed our abasement.* "All my endeavours in this quarter," he wrote on the 15th of March, "have been to urge forward movements, and at last I have managed to send up every disposable man. Brigadier England marched from Dadur on the 7th (of March), and must be at Quettah by this time. The remainder of his troops intended for service above will march about the 23rd or 24th, so that he will have assembled at Quettah by the end of the month (including the garrison) one troop of European Horse Artillery, six guns; half a company of Bombay European

* How strongly Outram felt on the subject of the withdrawal policy may be gathered from the following passage in a letter to Sir Richmond Shakespear: "As this is not a time to mince matters, no sooner did I see the orders of government to General Pollock to withdraw the Jellalabad garrison, and to retire to India under any circumstances (except the Sikhs rising against us, which, by-the-by, that measure would have brought about most probably), than I wrote, in the most earnest manner I was capable of, pointing out that our bitterest foe could not have devised a more injurious measure, whether viewed politically or in a military light; but expressing my trust that Mr. Clerk would act on the responsibility vested in him to prevent so ruinous a step. My mind is now set at rest by General Pollock's deter-

mination, now gleaned from your letters. I honour the General, therefore; and should he be allowed to carry out his views, we shall have mainly to thank him, not only for retrieving our honour in Afghanistan, but for saving India to us, the loss of which would ultimately result from disgracefully succumbing to the Afghans now. . . . Nothing is easier than to retrieve our honour in Afghanistan previously to finally withdrawing, should the government so determine; and I pray God, Lord Ellenborough may at once see the damnable consequences of shirking the undertaking, and order accordingly; otherwise the disaster of Caubul will be but the commencement of our misfortunes."—[*Major Outram to Sir Richmond Shakespear: March 15, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

Artillery; Major Sotheby's company of Bengal European Artillery; her Majesty's 41st Foot; three regiments of Native Infantry and a flank battalion of the same; two squadrons of Native Regular Cavalry, and 200 Poonah Horse. Of the above, two regiments of Native Infantry and half a company of artillery will be required to garrison Quettah. All the remainder will be available to reinforce General Nott, and will march on Candahar with that view in the first week of April, I trust, with everything that is required by the Candahar garrison, namely, twenty lakhs of treasure, ammunition, and medicines. I hope, however, that Brigadier England will, in the mean while, push on a detachment with a portion of these supplies to meet a brigade at the Kojuck, which General Nott talks of sending out to receive what can be afforded."*

On the 16th of March, Brigadier England arrived at Quettah. On the following day, he wrote to Lieutenant Hammersley, the political agent at that place: "The 22nd is at length fixed as the day of my departure from hence, and in truth I do not see how it could advantageously be hastened, owing to the numerous demands made on my small means. I propose, unless other intervening events should change such purpose, to move as far as Hykulzye on the 24th, and there await intelligence from the northern extremity of the Kojuck Pass. This you must manage for me. I could move at once to Killa-Abdoollah; but it seems to me advisable to try the influence of our presence in the Pisheen valley, in the matter of supplies and camels. The amount of treasure I take to Candahar will not exceed four lakhs, and about one-third of a lakh of musket ammunition; we have not carriage or protection for more at a time." On

* *Major Outram to Sir Richmond Shakespear: March 15, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*

the following day he wrote again to Lieutenant Hammersley, stating that he was determined to halt in the Pisheen valley, unless General Nott had actually sent two or three regiments to the Kojuck to meet the treasure; and Hammersley, when he forwarded a copy of this letter to Outram, wrote that there were officers in England's brigade who openly prophesied that the detachment would be sacrificed between Quettah and the Kojuck Pass.*

On the 26th of March, the Brigadier moved forward on the Pisheen valley, taking with him five companies of her Majesty's 41st Regiment, six companies of Bombay Native Infantry, a troop of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry, fifty men of the Poonah Horse, and four Horse-Artillery guns. Early on the 28th he "arrived at the entrance of a defile which leads to the village of Hykulzye," at which place he "had intended to await the remainder of the brigade now in progress to this place through the Bolan Pass."† It was plain that General Nott had no intention to send any troops to the southward to co-operate with England's detachment;‡ and it soon became apparent that the latter

* "There are some officers in camp who think that Brigadier England's detachment will be sacrificed between this and the Kojuck; but with such fine examples as those set by Woodburn on the Helmund, Anderson at Tazee, and Wymer at Assyab, surely there ought to be no doubt of success between this and the Kojuck, when no natural obstacles to signify intervene."—[*Lieutenant Hammersley to Major Outram: March 18, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

† *Major-General England to Government: April 2, 1842. Published Papers.*

‡ Nott had resolutely refused to send any troops to meet England's detachment, though earnestly pressed by Rawlinson to do so. The General urged that he could not afford to send troops to the Kojuck, whilst he

was liable at any time to be called upon to proceed to the relief of Khelat-i-Ghilzye. Rawlinson pointed out the immense evils attending a total deprivation of treasure, and said that even the compulsory abandonment of Candahar might follow the failure of General England to effect the passage of the Kojuck. Nott, however, was obdurate. The detachment was not sent. Wymer's brigade, however, was then out to the southward of Candahar, and it was believed that the object of the movement was to support the party advancing through the Kojuck. Nott withdrew the brigade to Candahar, and an impression gained ground among the enemy that we had endeavoured to open our communications with the troops below, but had drawn back in despair.

would have done well to have retained his position at Quettah until reinforced by the troops moving up from the southward. England found himself near the village of Hykulzye, knowing nothing about the country, and nothing about the movements of the enemy. Colonel Stacy accompanied the force as its political director. He had, some days before, informed the General that he might expect to meet the enemy at Hykulzye; but as they approached that place no intelligence of their position was to be obtained, and not before England was close upon them had he any knowledge that they were in his front. Mahomed Sadig had come down determined to dispute our progress, and was now posted, with his troops, behind some *sungahs* on the Hykulzye heights.

England halted the column, and rode forward with his staff to reconnoitre the enemy's position. After the lapse of about a quarter of an hour he returned, and the force was ordered to advance. The horse-artillery guns were now opened on the hills to the left, whilst Major Aphorpe, with the light battalion, was instructed to storm the hills to the right. Leslie's battery played with good effect, throwing its shrapnel among the enemy; but the infantry column was disastrously beaten back. The enemy rose up suddenly from behind their *sungahs* and poured in such a destructive fire upon our columns that the light companies fell back. Captain May, of the 41st, was shot dead. Major Aphorpe,* who commanded the light companies, was carried, desperately wounded, to the rear. A sabre-cut had laid open his skull, and another had nearly severed his right arm. Of a party of less

* Of the 20th Bombay Native Infantry. He was greatly esteemed as a gallant and good soldier. "They have a fine fellow at the head of the light battalion," wrote Hammersley to Outram, a few days before the brigade left Quettah, "and it is to be hoped that he will inspire the crest-fallen with a little ardour."—[MS. Correspondence.]

than 500 men nearly a hundred were killed or wounded. The enemy fought with uncommon gallantry, and many of them were bayoneted or shot on the hill. Among them were five or six of their chiefs. Mahomed Sadig himself, who had been behind the defences, but had quitted them on the advance of our light battalion, and joined the horsemen on the hill, received a bayonet-wound on the shoulder.

Our men, after their repulse, soon rallied, and were eager again to be led to the attack. But England had determined to retreat. Colonel Stacy volunteered to lead a party of a hundred men up the hill and carry the defences; but the gallant offer was declined.* Three times he pressed it upon the General, but with no effect. It was believed by the latter that the Hykulzye defences could be carried only by a strong brigade, and one, too, equipped with mortars. So he wrote to General Nott, urging him to send a force so equipped to meet him; and in the mean while fell back upon Quettah.† And there he began to entrench himself, as though he were about to be besieged by an overwhelming force.

No satisfactory reasons have yet been assigned for this

* "General England and his staff were dismounted, and standing in conversation not far from where the light companies had rallied. I joined them. It was useless to stand and lament over what could not be recalled. A retreat was determined upon. I observed to the General that the day might be retrieved, and offered to lead into the entrenched position with a hundred men properly supported; and I am confident that I should have succeeded. The men were in courage, and anxious to recover the bodies of their comrades. The General replied, he had not men. I proposed that the left hill should be attacked first, as it commanded the smaller one. The enemy were certainly in strength,

and very bold, but our men burned with rage at seeing their comrades cut up before their eyes. I think I pressed my offer three times, the last time volunteering to lead with eighty men; but the General felt he had too few, and that the stake was too great."—[*Colonel Stacy's Narrative of Services in Beloochistan and Afghanistan in the Years 1840, 1841, 1842.*]

† It appears to have been England's intention, after the disaster on the 28th, to have commenced his retreat on the same evening; but Colonel Stacy persuaded him not to move until the following morning. On the 29th he struck his camp and marched to Hykerzye, halted at Kooch-lag on the 30th, and on the 31st reached Quettah.

unhappy miscarriage. But excuses have been urged in abundance. It was alleged that the defences at Hykulzye were impracticable—that they had been two months in course of erection—that the General had received no plan of them from the political authorities—that he was not, in fact, aware of their existence—that he had been deceived by false accounts of the number of the enemy—that strong reinforcements had come down from Candahar—and that the Sepoys did not support the European soldiers at Hykulyze. But upon a careful examination of all these charges and assertions, it does not appear that one can be maintained.

The defences at Hykulzye were not formidable. General England had not seen them at this time. Lieutenant Evans, of the 41st, did see them; and he said that there were “no breastworks, but merely a four-foot ditch filled with brushwood.” The elevations were nothing more than those heaps of earth and stone known as *sungals*, which may be, and often are, thrown up in a few hours. The best information that Hammersley could obtain went to show that these defences were thrown up by Mahomed Sadig when General England’s force had reached Kooch-lag—not before. When the brigade advanced from Quettah a month afterwards, the Hykulzye defences were found to be so formidable that some of the officers rode over them, not knowing where they were.

The strength of the enemy at Hykulzye seems to have been exaggerated very much in the same manner as the strength of the defences. General England wrote to Hammersley on the 28th of March, after his unsuccessful engagement, that the enemy were “a hundred to one stronger than any one expected.”* Hammersley and

* Hammersley complained that the factory, that if it had not been for General’s letter was so very unsatisfactory, some private letters, he would have

Stacy had both told the General that he might expect Mahomed Sadig to make a stand at Hykulzye. The former officer had computed the strength of the enemy at 1000 foot and 300 horse; and his subsequent inquiries went to show that he had rather overstated than understated the number actually engaged. England's own officers estimated the strength of the enemy at from 1000 to 1300 men; and native testimony went to show that they had overstated the number of horsemen in the field. The strong reinforcements which were said to have come down from Candahar before the 28th of March were purely fabulous. There had been some talk of such a movement, but not until after the affair with Colonel Wymer's brigade on the 25th of March. Then it was debated among the chiefs whether a party should not be sent down to the Kojuck to intercept the convoy advancing from the southward. An invitation

been left in ignorance of the real nature of the events that had occurred. The original letter, now before me, is worth quoting. England seems to have been so unwilling to state distinctly that he had been defeated, that even when writing officially to General Nott on the 1st instant, he shrunk from a plain statement of the circumstances of the case; so that Nott, writing to him on the 18th, could only say: "I have been favoured with your letter of the 1st instant, &c. . . . I have also heard of the affair you had with the enemy on the 28th ult." The letter to Nott is, however, less obscure than the letter to Hammersley, which runs thus:

"Camp, three miles south of Hykulzye, 2 P.M.

"MY DEAR HAMMERSLEY,—I wish you would acquaint Colonel Marshall, that as the insurgent force has been much reinforced from Candahar, and have so strongly protected themselves with breastworks, &c., on the ground

commanding our line of route this side of Hykulzye, I shall fall back to Hykerzye to-morrow, my presence here being now of no use, and inviting their insults; and it is probable that as the position at Hykerzye is not a good one, having much broken ground in its rear, that I shall further fall back on Cutchlak. I have had so many men killed and wounded by the enemy, that my baggage is increased whilst my means of defending it is lessened. If Colonel Marshall, through your information, thinks the Cutchlak Pass occupied, he may make such efforts as his numbers will enable him to keep it open and communicate with us; and as the enemy is a hundred to one stronger than any one imagined, I must wait for the reinforcements till I try them again. Meanwhile, the fortification of Quettah must be proceeded with vigorously. Show this to Colonel Marshall and Major Waddington.

"Sincerely yours (in haste),
"R. ENGLAND."

from Mahomed Sadig had arrived in their camp, and it had come at an opportune season. Greatly depressed by the failure of their efforts in the neighbourhood of Candahar, the Douranee chiefs were almost on the point of breaking up their camp, when intelligence of the fall of Ghuznee came to revive their spirits. They were then at Dehla. There the tidings of the advance of England's convoy reached them, and there they received an invitation from Mahomed Sadig to send troops to reinforce him. Expecting that their own camp would be strengthened by the arrival of Shumshooden Khan, they believed that they might safely detach a party to the southward. Accordingly, Saloo Khan and some other chiefs* set out towards the Kojuck. But they had hardly commenced their march when England was driven back at Hykulzye. The chiefs fell out on the road, and Saloo Khan alone made his way to the southern passes—but not a man even of his party had joined Mahomed Sadig on that disastrous 28th of March, when England sought to justify his failure by a reference to the reinforcements from Candahar.

Only one more point remains to be mentioned in connexion with a subject which the chronicler of these events is but too anxious to dismiss. General England insinuated that he had no reliance upon his Sepoy troops. He is said to have remarked, that although when his troops and those of General Nott were united they would have 15,000 men under their command, they could not oppose a whole nation with two

* "April 1.—The Douranees having received positive accounts from Mahomed Sadig of the advance of Brigadier England with treasure, have resolved to make an effort to intercept it. Saloo Khan accordingly, with Mahomed Azim (Noorzye), Fyz Tullub, Hubeeboollah, Sooltan Mahomed (Barukzye), &c, have gone off by the desert to the Kojuck Pass. The body of horse with the chiefs is about 1000; but they expect to raise some 4000 or 5000 of the Noorzye, Atchekzye, Barukzye, and Populzye Ooloos to assist in holding the pass."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

weak regiments.* He thought that her Majesty's two regiments, the 40th and 41st, were the only two corps that could be relied upon. Nott told a different story. "My Sepoys are behaving nobly," was his constant report. I can find no mention of any backwardness on the part of the Sepoys, in any of the letters written by the officers of either service after the affair at Hykulzye; and I believe, that if Colonel Stacy had been suffered to storm the works after the first repulse, a large number of Sepoys would have volunteered to follow him.

When all the circumstances of the case come to be considered, it appears that a disaster of a very discouraging character was sustained by the adoption of a course which had no object of importance commensurate with the risk that was incurred. General England had no intention of advancing upon Candahar. He ought, therefore, to have remained at Quettah. The advance into the Pisheen valley was a grave error. It was plainly England's duty, at this time, either to have cleared the pass with the treasure and stores which were so much needed by the Candahar garrison, or to have waited patiently for his reinforcements at Quettah. To advance from that place, and then to fall back upon it, was to do that which Nott said, in anticipation, would be more injurious to the position of the Candahar force than 20,000 of the enemy in the field.† Major Outram

* "You will understand the insinuation," wrote one of the most chivalrous of the many chivalrous officers who served beyond the Indus. "If he is ever heard to libel our Sepoys in that manner, surely it will be noticed by our officers."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† After adverting to the reported intention of England to leave Quettah with a small supply of money and ammunition, but not to push through the Kojuck, Nott goes on to say:

"This I deeply regret; firstly, because I cannot send a force to the southern side of the pass; secondly, I require a large supply of ammunition, which I have for two years been endeavouring to get, but without success; thirdly, four lakhs of rupees will be of little use here—the troops and establishments are going on for four months in arrears; fourthly, your moving into Pisheen with a convoy, known by the whole country to be intended for Candahar, and then

also strongly advised General England to await at Quettah the arrival of the reinforcements from below—but England would go on to be beaten.*

To Nott, this failure was mortifying in the extreme. He was in no mood to brook delays and excuses. The disaster at Hykulzye was sufficiently annoying to him; but the seeming unwillingness of General England to redeem his character by a vigorous movement in advance, irritated him still more. He had been for some time complaining bitterly of the neglect to which he and his force had been subjected by the authorities below. "I know not the intentions of government regarding this country," he wrote to General England; "but this I know and feel—that it is now from four to five months since the outbreak at Caubul, and in all that time no aid whatever has been given to me. I have continually called for cavalry, for ammunition, treasure, stores, and medicines for the sick. I have called loudly, but I have called in vain. Had the least aid been sent—even a regiment of cavalry—I could have tranquillised or subdued the country. I have been tied to this important city, when a few additional troops for its garrison would have set me free; and I now would have moved on Ghuznee and Caubul. All I have now to do is to uphold the honour of my country in the best manner I can without the assistance above alluded to, and in ignorance of the

halting or retiring to Quettah, will have the very worst effects throughout Afghanistan, and will be more injurious to my present position than 20,000 of the enemy in the field. I sincerely hope that you have not moved, or that you have determined to push across the Kojuck with all the force you can muster."—[*General Nott to General England: April 2, 1842. MS. Records.*]

* "I strongly advised Brigadier England, through Lieutenant Ham-

mersley, in letters I addressed to them both so long ago as the 10th ultimo (March), to await at Quettah the junction of the remainder of his brigade, unless very urgent circumstances should require his more immediate advance to meet an advance from Candahar. The latter, so far from being the case, General Nott requested might not be attempted."

—[*Major Outram to Captain Durand: April 3, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

intentions of government.”* In this frame of mind, his patience well-nigh exhausted, his temper never of the most genial cast, now more than ever overclouded, he received intelligence, first of England’s defeat, and then of his reluctance to move forward. England himself announced the latter, if not in so many plain words, in language equally unmistakable. After setting forth all the dangers and difficulties of a forward movement, he concluded, on the 10th of April, a letter to Nott by saying: “Whenever it so happens that you retire bodily in this direction, and that I am informed of it, I feel assured that I shall be able to make an advantageous diversion in your favour.”†

This was too much for Nott. Determined at once to settle the question of England’s advance, he sat down and wrote the following letter to the General. There is so fine a soldierly flavour about it, that I am unwilling to omit a word:

Candahar, April 18, 1842.

SIR,

I have been favoured with your letters of the 1st and 10th instant. I have also heard of the affair you had with the enemy on the 28th ultimo, and deeply regret the result. I have attentively perused the government despatch of the 15th ultimo forwarded through you. I have looked at our position in Afghanistan in every point of view that my judgment, aided by three years’ experience of its people, will admit of. I now deliberately note what I consider to be necessary to carry out the intention of the Supreme Government and to assert and uphold the honour of our country. Even should the government ultimately determine on withdrawing the British troops from the right of the Indus, it would be impossible to retire the troops below the passes before October. The troops at Candahar are four months in arrears, and we have not one rupee in the treasury. In the event of much field service we should run short of musket ammunition, and we

* *General Nott to General England:*
April 2, 1842. *MS. Records.*

† *General England to General Nott:*
April 10, 1842. *MS. Records.*

are without medicine for the sick and wounded. I think it absolutely necessary that a strong brigade of 2500 men should be immediately pushed from Quettah to Candahar with the supplies noted in the foregoing paragraph. I therefore have to acquaint you that I will direct a brigade of three regiments of infantry, a troop of horse artillery, with a body of cavalry, to march from Candahar on the morning of *the 25th instant*. This force will certainly be at Chummun, at the northern foot of the Kojuck, on the morning of the 1st of May, and possibly on the 30th of this month. I shall, therefore, fully rely on your marching a brigade from Quettah so that it may reach the southern side of the pass on the above-mentioned date. I believe there can be no difficulty whatever in accomplishing this, nor of crossing the Kojuck without loss, provided the heights are properly crowned on either side. I have crossed it three times in command of troops, and I know that what I now state is correct. There can be no danger in passing through Pisheen provided a careful and well-ordered march is preserved, and patrols and flanking parties of horse are thrown well out. The people of this country cannot withstand our troops in the open field. I am well aware that war cannot be made without loss, but yet, perhaps, the British troops can oppose Asiatic armies without defeat; and I feel and know that British officers should never despair of punishing the atrocious and treacherous conduct of a brutal enemy. You say you are not aware if I know the localities of Quettah. I know them well; and I hope I shall be excused when I express my surprise that the authorities at Quettah should for a moment have thought of throwing up breastworks and entrenching that straggling and wretched cantonment, when the town and its citadel is so well calculated for every purpose which can render a post at all desirable in Shawl, and I am quite certain may be well defended by 500 men. Did I command at Quettah, I would relinquish the cantonment—it is useless: Quettah is not a place for a large body of troops. I feel obliged to you for pointing out the many difficulties attending our position, but you are aware that it is our first and only duty to overcome difficulties when the national honour and military reputation is so deeply concerned—nothing can be accomplished without effort and perseverance. In the last para. of your letter of the 10th instant, I have only to observe that I have not yet contemplated falling back. Without money I can

neither pay the long arrears due to the troops, nor procure carriage for field operations. I deeply regret this state of things, which ought to have been attended to months ago. Had this been done, I should now have been on my march to Ghuznee. I shall fully rely on your brigade being at the Kojuck on the 1st of May or before. This letter I request may be forwarded to Major Outram.

W. NOTT, Major-General.

To Major-General England, commanding
S. F. Force.

P.S.—You will of course perceive that I intend your brigade should join and accompany the detachment sent from this to Candahar. I have no cattle for treasure or stores.

It was impossible to resist the urgency of this appeal. The orders from Candahar were not to be misunderstood. They were clear as the notes of a trumpet, and ought to have been as spirit-stirring. England's brigade now began to prepare for a forward movement. So little, however, had it been anticipated that the force would ever leave Quettah, that the officers of the brigade had been buying houses and settling down for cantonment life.* But on the 26th of April England broke ground; and on the 28th—precisely a month after the date of his disastrous failure—was again before Hykulzye. The enemy, emboldened by their previous success, were posted on the ground they had occupied before; but they soon found that they had not estimated aright the character of British troops, and that what they had regarded as a proof of their own superiority in the field, was an accident not likely to be repeated. The British troops were told off into three parties—one, under Major Simmons, to storm the hills to the left; another, under Captain Woodburn, to attack the hill on the right, where the disaster of the previous month had occurred; and a third, under Major Browne, was kept in reserve.

* *Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*

When they had taken up their position, the guns of Leslie's battery opened with good effect on the enemy; and then the infantry advanced with a loud "hurrah" to the attack. They are said to have moved forward "as steady as on parade."* The coolness and courage of the infantry soon completed what the admirable practice of the guns had commenced. The enemy turned and fled. Delamaine's cavalry were then slipped in pursuit; and there was an end of the defence of Hykulzye.

On the morning of the 30th, England's brigade entered the defile leading to the Kojuck Pass. Here, for some unaccountable reason, the General halted the column, dismounted from his horse, called for a chair, and sate himself down. In vain Colonel Stacy implored him to move on. In vain he urged that the Candahar troops were entering the pass from the other side, and that all the glory of the enterprise would be theirs. In vain Major Waddington, the engineer, pressed the same advice on the General. The Bombay force was locked-up at the entrance to the pass, whilst Wymer, with the Bengal regiments, was gallantly crowning the Kojuck, and reporting everything clear for the advance of the Quettah brigade. The Sepoys of those three noble regiments—the 2nd, the 16th, and 38th, who would have followed Wymer wherever he pleased to lead them—were now climbing the precipitous ascents, disencumbered of whatever might clog their movements,† and

* *Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*

† "These fine fellows had been led forward by Colonel Wymer, at daybreak, to occupy the heights commanding the pass from Chummemo to the western side, to secure General England's party a safe passage. I have never seen our Sepoys to such advantage. It was impossible to climb the precipitous hills in pantaloons; this part of their dress had,

therefore, been discarded, and the men were in their doties. As they showed on every accessible point, they were the admiration of all. I can easily imagine how painful it must have been to the Bombay regiments to find the Candahar troops in full possession of the pass before they were allowed to enter it."—[*Colonel Stacy's Narrative.*]

every accessible height was bristling with the bayonets of the Candahar force. The Bombay troops were bitterly disappointed; but they cordially fraternised with their new comrades, and, if they felt any pangs of envy, they were too forbearing to express them.

It was with no common anxiety that Nott now awaited the return of his regiments. He had sent them reluctantly to the Kojuck, and was eager to commence operations in another direction—to march upon Ghuznee, and then onward to meet Pollock at the capital. In the letters which he addressed at this time to his brother General at Jellalabad, his feelings found vent. They are eminently characteristic:

Candahar, April 29th, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

My last news from your side was of the 5th instant. I regret I am not on my way to Ghuznee—I am tied to this place. My troops have had no pay since December, 1841. I am in want of almost everything. I have not carriage even for three regiments, and I have not a rupee to buy or to hire cattle. For five months I have been calling for aid from Sindh—none whatever has been sent. At last Major-General England moved with money and stores, but received a check in Pisheen, and then retired to Shawl! I have now been obliged to send the best part of my force to the Kojuck Pass, in hopes of getting the treasure and stores I have so long been expecting, and without which my small force is paralysed. It is dreadful to think of all this. I ought to have been on my way to extend my hand to you from Ghuznee, instead of which I am obliged to make a movement on the Kojuck. I have felt the want of cavalry. I have the Shah's first regiment, but I have never been able to *get them to charge*. My Sepoys have behaved nobly, and have licked the Afghans in every affair, even when five times their number. The moment my brigade returns from the Kojuck I move on Kelat-i-Ghilzye and Ghuznee, in hopes of saving some of our officers and men at the latter place. Instead of sending me cavalry, money, &c., the authority in Sindh coolly says, "When you retire bodily I

hope to render you some assistance." I believe I shall go mad!
I have much to say, but am confined to a slip of paper.

Yours sincerely, W. NOTT.*

Candahar, May 6th, 1842.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I have this day received your letter of the 14th ultimo. I had before heard of your progress up to the 6th of April: this is the only note I have received from you. I enclose a copy of my note of the 29th of last month, which was sent *vid* Kelat-i-Ghilzye, and by which you will perceive how much I have been disappointed, and the state of the force under my command. It drove me almost mad to be forced to send the best part of my force to the Kojuck Pass instead of marching towards Caubul; but I had not a rupee to pay the long arrears of the troops, or to purchase cattle. The people of this country unfortunately have an idea that we are to retire whether we are successful or not, and therefore they will part with nothing; and, as far as cattle are concerned, we are nearly helpless. God knows why such delay has occurred in sending me money and stores. This is dreadful. I shall move towards Caubul the moment I can get carriage. General England's retrograde movement has been a sad disappointment to me.

Yours sincerely, W. NOTT.†

P.S.—England has now, with the aid of my brigade, crossed the pass. He brings with him two twelve-pounder howitzers; but for these I should not have a single howitzer at command. Mortars I have none. I expect the troops here on the 10th. The Ghazchs still keep head within a few miles of us, not in great strength: the nucleus, however, exists. I have directed all camels within reach to be procured on any terms: want of money alone prevented me doing this earlier. The force I shall take from this must depend upon the available cattle. I trust it may amount to 5000 men. Rely on my making every effort to communicate with you; but from past experience I must regard this as extremely doubtful, and that we must not depend on mutual intelligence enabling us to make combined movements. No opportunity shall be lost; but if all attempts at correspondence fail, I will still hope that, as we have one object at heart, the

* MS. Correspondence.

† MS. Correspondence.

similarity of our operations may in some measure supply the want of a concerted plan.

Without any opposition the two united brigades now marched on to Candahar, and entered the city on the 10th of May. The enemy had broken up and dispersed. Saloo Khan, who had come down to the assistance of Mahomed Sadig, had fallen out with that chief. He had never thrown his heart into the cause, and was, indeed, at any time, to be purchased by British gold. Rawlinson thought that a little money would be well expended on the purchase of his allegiance, but Nott objected to the measure.* In the mean while, however, Stacy had been exerting himself with good success below the Kojuck to obtain the co-operation of this man in the important work of keeping open the communication between Quettah and Candahar; and when he reached the latter place, he was able to report that Saloo Khan had promised all that was required of him; and that Atta-oollah Khan, the brother of the chief, was now accompanying him for the purpose of concluding the necessary arrangements.†

* "I have only," wrote Nott, "to repeat my sentiments—namely, that I will not sanction a rupee being given from the British treasury to these people. I have for three years viewed with deep regret the ruinous system of giving away large sums to the chiefs and Sirdars of Afghanistan, which I sincerely believe has brought upon us all our present difficulties in this country. I have offered to guarantee the personal safety of Saloo Khan if he returns to his allegiance by a certain day. If there are any other chiefs who can make it appear that they are worthy of the indulgence of my guarantee for their personal safety, I will take their wishes into consideration; but I will make them no other promises. This does not apply to Mahomed Atta or to Meerza Ahmed, as I will not receive these two men on any terms, without the order of higher authority."—[General Nott to Major

Rawlinson: April 9, 1842. MS. Correspondence.]

† See Colonel Stacy's Narrative, and his correspondence with Major Rawlinson. Rawlinson, however, doubted whether the negotiations with Saloo Khan would have a favorable result: "Had a long conference," he wrote on the 10th of May, "with Atta-oollah Khan, who has come in to treat for his brother, Saloo; and the latter, if his agent is to be believed, certainly desires to espouse our cause. Knowing, however, as I do, Saloo's ambition and avarice, I question very much whether we shall come to any satisfactory arrangement with him. We merely require Saloo Khan's co-operation, in order to facilitate the re-establishment of our dawk communication; but the Khan talks of rank, power, and pay, as the return he has a right to expect for joining us, and is not likely to be satisfied with any

In the mean while, the Douranee chiefs, though dis-united, were not inactive. It was hard to determine with any distinctness what were their designs at this time—so contradictory were the accounts which reached our camp, and so inconsistent the movements of the enemy. But it seemed that our difficulties were very sensibly diminishing. As the spring advanced, the general aspect of affairs was brighter and more encouraging than it had been since the first outbreak of the revolution. The chiefs were scattered about in all directions—some wounded and dying—others eager to make terms with the British. Meerza Ahmed and Sufder Jung were contemplating a withdrawal across the frontier to Laush and Jowayn. The latter was corresponding with the British agent, and expressing his desire to return to our camp. The Caubul Janbaz had deserted in disgust. The principal men of the surrounding villages were sending messages into our camp, offering to withdraw all their people from the rebel standard if we would guarantee them against the depredations of our troops. The trade of the *Ghazee* was plainly at a discount. And whilst the elements of decay were thus discernible within, there were external influences at work to weaken the rebel cause. Glad tidings arrived from the eastward. General Pollock had advanced upon Jellalabad; had relieved the garrison of that place; and had, it was said, determined to march upon the capital. A royal salute was fired at Candahar; and as the tidings of our successes spread through the country the spirits of the insurgents became more and more depressed.

moderate measure of conciliation."—
(*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*)
Saloo Khan, however, in the sequel
rendered good service and proved his
fidelity in the face of strenuous op-
position from some of the other chiefs:
"His falling off from the cause of

Islam," wrote Rawlinson in his Jour-
nal, "has plunged him into personal
difficulties. He has been twice at-
tacked by Mahomed Sadig and Meer
Afzul, and has been wounded, to-
gether with his brother and his
nephew."

Still it was obvious that whilst Meerza Ahmed and Atta Mahomed continued to flit about the neighbourhood of Candahar, there was no prospect of permanent tranquillity. Lesser chiefs might tender their submission, but whilst these, the main-springs of the great insurrectionary movement, were employing their talents and exercising their influence in hostility against us, there was little chance of any effective movement for the suppression of rebellion in Western Afghanistan. Armed with authority from the Shah himself, granted prior to the great outbreak, Meerza Ahmed was raising revenue in the name of the local government, and expending the money thus collected on the maintenance of the war. It appeared expedient, therefore, to Nott, to cause a proclamation to be issued, cautioning the inhabitants against paying revenue to the Meerza. This was a measure of unquestionable propriety; but Nott was disposed to go far beyond it. He was eager to offer a reward to any one who would bring in either Meerza Ahmed or Atta Mahomed to his camp; and on the 7th of April he wrote to Rawlinson on the subject: "I wish a proclamation to be immediately issued, prohibiting any person paying revenue to Meerza Ahmed or to Suffder Jung, and making them to understand, that whatever sums they pay to these chiefs will be their own loss, as the regular revenue due to his Majesty the Shah will be exacted from them by the authorities of Candahar. I will thank you in the proclamation to offer a reward of 5000 rupees to any person who will bring in either Meerza Ahmed or Mahomed Atta. The sooner this is done the better. Let me see the draft of the proclamation before it is issued."*

Startled at this bold and questionable proposition, Rawlinson, having asked in the first place whether the proclamation was to be issued in the General's own

* *MS. Correspondence.*

name, or in that of Prince Timour, and having suggested that on a question of such importance as that of the raising of revenue the wishes of the Prince should be previously ascertained, went on to speak in his letter, of the proposed rewards. "Is the reward of 5000 rupees," he asked, "also offered to any one bringing in Mahomed Atta or Meerza Ahmed, to apply to these people dead or alive, or is it merely to be given in the event of any of the Afghans bringing them in as prisoners? I do not think the Prince would have any objection to issue the proclamation about revenue, and to signify to all his subjects that he has appointed Meerza Wulce Mahomed Khan to the management of this department, notwithstanding he is aware that papers of an exactly opposite tenor, issued by his father, are in Meerza Ahmed's hands; but I greatly doubt his acquiescing in the subject of the reward, as, whatever may be the secret feelings of Mahomedans regarding betrayal or assassination, it is altogether repugnant to their habits to avow such objects in a public proclamation."*

To this Nott replied that, as a matter of course, he intended the proclamation regarding the revenue to be issued in the name of the Prince. "In regard," he added, "to the reward for the apprehension of Meerza Ahmed, that is a different thing; and if the Prince will not consent to include it in the proclamation regarding the revenue, where it ought to appear, I will issue a separate proclamation. Meerza Ahmed has murdered my camp-followers and Sepoys in the most cruel and atrocious manner, and it is my duty, merely as commander of the force, to offer a reward to any person who will bring him in. Mahomed Atta has, like a monster, murdered our officers in their houses, and cut to pieces our unarmed and inoffensive camp-followers. I will show no mercy to these men. My note said

* *MS. Correspondence.*

nothing about 'dead or alive,' and I thought clearly indicated bringing them in prisoners. Why you make use of the word 'assassination' I know not—but I do know that it ought not to be used by Englishmen in any public document, and therefore it could never enter into my mind when speaking of a proclamation. Meerza Ahmed is collecting what he is pleased to call revenue, to enable him to raise men to attack the force under my command. Such plunder ought to be put a stop to.*

Then Rawlinson answered, that he regretted that the unguarded use of the ugly word "assassination," which he only intended to convey the meaning which the Prince might put upon a general offer of reward for the persons of the proscribed chiefs, should have given any offence to the General; but that he trusted Nott would excuse him if he made a few remarks upon the subject of the proposed proclamation. "We are accused, and perhaps suspected," he wrote, "of having lately suborned people to attempt the life of Mahomed Akbar Khan; and Captain Nicolson is known to have offered a high reward on one occasion for the head of the Gooroo; and it would be very difficult, therefore, it appears to me, in our present proclamation, to get the Afghans to appreciate the difference between the offer of a reward for the betrayal of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta into our hands, to be executed by the Prince (as every one must know they would be) on their arrival at Candahar, and for anticipating this sentence by taking their lives on the spot, wherever a man might be found bold enough to attempt the deed. Now, if any misunderstanding on this subject existed, and we were believed by our proclamation to be aiming at the lives rather than at the liberty of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta, it would be only natural for them to retaliate, and, aided by religious enthusiasm, and with

* *MS. Correspondence.*

the voice of the country in their favour, they would be far more likely, I think, to succeed in bribing Ghazees to kill our officers, than we would be in tempting any of the Afghans to seize the persons of the proscribed individuals and hand them over to us for execution. I cannot help thinking also, that even supposing the proclamation to be expressly stated and understood to aim only at the liberty of the two heads of the Candahar rebellion, still it would operate rather to our detriment than our advantage, and would tend greatly to increase the inveteracy of our present contest with the Afghans. It would, probably, be met by the kidnapping of our own officers at this place, and I suspect it would be fraught with danger to our unfortunate countrymen in confinement at Lughman, at Caubul, and at Ghuznee. Should you still, however, desire to make the attempt to obtain possession of the persons of Meerza Ahmed and Mahomed Atta, I shall be happy to render literally into Persian any draft of a proclamation which you will send me, and to give the proclamation all possible publicity."

The arguments of Rawlinson prevailed. But soon another source of inquietude arose. The ex-chief of Candahar, Kohun-dil-Khan, appeared to be again turning his thoughts towards the government of his old principality.* He had, ever since his expulsion from

* "Letters are said to have been received from the ex-Sirdars announcing their intended journey to this place, according to Meerza Ahmed's invitation which was sent to them in January last. Mahomed Reza Khan of Seistan is also said to have promised to assist them with 100 camels, and to send horsemen to escort them to this frontier. This news appears to be *vraisemblable* in the extreme. If the ex-Sirdars can get away from Shuhur-i-Babek, either with or without the connivance of the Persian

Government, nothing is more likely than that they should make an attempt to recover Candahar; and I should greatly dread their appearance on this frontier, for we are enabled to keep up the form, and something of the power of a local government, almost solely from the adherence to us of the old Barukzye retainers—people on whose fidelity we could not possibly depend if the Sirdars took the field against us."—[Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal: April 4, 1842.]

Afghanistan, been quietly domiciliated at Shuhur-i-Babek, in the Persian territories, between Shiraz and Kirman; but now it appeared that he had sent an agent into Scistan to communicate with his Candahar adherents; and was otherwise intriguing for the recovery of the dominion he had lost. Not without some difficulty had Rawlinson throughout this season of convulsion contrived to maintain a recognised system of government, in the name of Shah Soojah. The internal administration of the country had never been suspended; but it was only through the agency of some of the old Barukzye functionaries that the British political chief had succeeded, in the midst of such disturbing influences, in carrying on the government of Western Afghanistan. But there was little hope of his continuing to exercise this influence if the old Barukzye Sirdars again appeared on the stage. Already had Kohun-dil-Khan sent letters to Meerza Ahmed appointing him his Wakeel in all matters of revenue. It was even reported at one time that the ex-Sirdars were only a few marches from Candahar.* These anxieties, however, were but short-lived. After-intelligence from Persia encouraged the belief that the Persian Government would restrain the ex-Sirdars from crossing the frontier.† But other sources of inquietude and annoyance soon came to take their place. The heaviest blow of all was now about to descend upon them. It came from the Supreme Government itself.

* "A messenger from Shah Persund Khan of Laush reports that two of the horsemen sent down to Kohun-dil-Khan in January by Meerza Ahmed, returned lately and gave out that they were only a few days in advance of the Sirdars, who had left Shuhur-i-Babek secretly, and were coming here *via* Scistan."—[Major Rawlinson to General Nott:

April 8, 1842. *MS. Correspondence.*]

† Kohun-dil-Khan did not make his appearance in person in the Candahar territory till the beginning of 1843, when we had announced to the Persian Government that we had withdrawn behind the Sutlej, and were indifferent as to what became of the Sirdars or their country.

CHAPTER III.

[April—June: 1842.]

The Halt at Jellalabad—Positions of Pollock and Nott—Lord Ellenborough—Opening Measures of his Administration—Departure for Allahabad—His Indecision—The Withdrawal Orders—Their Effects—The “Missing Letter”—Negotiations for the Release of the Prisoners.

POLLOCK and Nott were now eager to advance. On both sides of Afghanistan a junction had been effected which enabled the two generals to maintain a bold front in the face of the enemy, to over-awe the surrounding country, and to inspire with new hopes and new courage the hearts of those whom the failures of Wild and England had filled with despondency and alarm. The English in India never doubted that the conduct of operations in Afghanistan was now in the hands of men equal to the duty which had been entrusted to them. They had full confidence in Pollock and Nott. There were now two fine forces of all arms, European and Native, in good health and good spirits, eager to advance on Caubul, and sure to carry victory before them. It seemed that the tide had now begun to turn in our favour. As the hot weather came on, the spirits of the Anglo-Indian community rose with the mercury in the thermometer; everybody said that we had seen the worst; and everybody looked for the speedy lustration

of the national honour which had been so hideously defiled.

But as the confidence of the public in the generals and their armies rose, the confidence of the public in the man upon whom had now devolved the great duty of shaping the counsels of the generals, and directing the movements of the armies, began rapidly to decline. On the 28th of February, Lord Ellenborough had landed at Calcutta and taken the oaths of office. The guns on the saluting battery of Fort William roared forth their welcome to the new Governor-General, and drowned the voices of those who were assembling in the Town-Hall to do honour to the departing ruler. The first intelligence of the disasters that had overtaken our arms in the countries beyond the Indus, had been telegraphed to him from Fort St. George, when standing on the deck of the *Cambrian* in the Madras Roads, he looked out upon the white surf, the low beach, and the dazzling houses of the southern presidency. He arrived, therefore, at the seat of the Supreme Government with little to learn beyond the measures which his predecessor had sanctioned for the extrication of the imperiled affairs of the British-Indian Empire from the thicket of difficulty that surrounded them.

What those measures were it is unnecessary to repeat. In the last letter written by Lord Auckland's administration to the secret committee—it bears date February 19, 1842—the Governor-General in Council said: "Since we have heard of the misfortunes in the Khybur Pass, and have been convinced that the difficulties at present opposed to us and in the actual state of our preparations we could not expect, at least in this year, to maintain a position in the Jellalabad districts for any effective purpose, we have made our directions in regard to withdrawal from Jellalabad clear and posi-

tive, and we shall rejoice to learn that Major-General Pollock will have anticipated these more express orders by confining his efforts to the same objects." And on the 24th of the same month—in one of the last public documents of any importance written under the instruction of Lord Auckland—a letter to General Pollock, that officer is distinctly informed that "the great present object of your proceedings at Peshawur is, beyond the safe withdrawal of the force at Jellalabad, that of watching events, of keeping up such communications as may be admissible with the several parties who may acquire power in the northern portion of Afghanistan, of committing yourself permanently with none of these parties, but also of declaring positively against none of them, while you are collecting the most accurate information of their relative strength and purposes for report to the government, and pursuing the measures which you may find in the powers for procuring the safe return of our troops and people detained beyond the Khybur Pass."* These were the parting instructions of the old Governor-General. Lord Ellenborough found matters in this state when he assumed the reins of office; and every one was now eager to ascertain what measures the new ruler would adopt.

The first public document of any importance to which he attached his name was a letter to the Commander-in-Chief. It was a letter from the Governor-General in Council, dated the 15th of March. It is a calm and able review of all the circumstances attending our position beyond the Indus, and is as free from febleness and indecision on the one side, as it is from haste and intemperance on the other. Lord Ellenborough at once decided that the conduct of Shah Soojah was, at least,

* *Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: February 24, 1842. Published Papers.*

suspicious,* and that the British Government were no longer compelled "to peril its armies, and with its armies the Indian Empire," in support of the tripartite treaty. Therefore, he said, "Whatever course we may hereafter take must rest solely upon military considerations, and hence, in the first instance, regard to the safety of the detached bodies of our troops at Jellalabad, at Ghuznee, at Khelat-i-Ghilzye and Candahar; to the security of our troops, now in the field, from all unnecessary risk; and finally, to the re-establishment of our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans, which may make it appear to them, and to our own subjects and to our allies, that we have the power of inflicting punishment upon those who commit atrocities and violate their faith, and that we withdraw ultimately from Afghanistan, not from any deficiency of means to maintain our position, but because we are satisfied that the King we have set up has not, as we were erroneously led to imagine, the support of the nation over which he has been placed." Here, in a few sentences, was mapped out the policy recommended by such men as Mr. Robertson and Mr. Clerk, the policy which Pollock and Nott were eager to reduce to action, and which, with few exceptions, the entire community of British-India were clamorously expressing their desire to see brought into vigorous effect.

This letter to the Commander-in-Chief was written in Calcutta; and it bears the signatures of the different members of the Supreme Council of India—of Mr.

* "The information received with respect to the conduct of Shah Soojah during the late transactions is necessarily imperfect, and, moreover, of a somewhat contradictory character. It is not probable that the insurrection against our troops should have originated with him. It is most probable, and it is almost proved, that he has adopted it, and, powerless in himself, is prepared to side with either party, by which he may hope to be maintained upon his precarious throne."—[*Governor-General in Council to Sir Jasper Nicolls: March 15, 1842. Published Papers.*]

Wilberforce Bird, of General Casment, and Mr. H. T. Prinsep. Nothing like it was ever written afterwards. On the 6th of April Lord Ellenborough left Calcutta. It seemed desirable that he should be nearer the frontier—nearer the Commander-in-Chief. The movement, at all events, indicated an intention to act with promptitude and energy. Already had the new Governor-General startled the sober, slow-going functionaries of Calcutta by his restless, and, as they thought, obtrusive activity. He seemed resolved to see everything for himself—to do everything for himself. Almost everything had been done wrongly by others; and now he was going to do it rightly himself. All this created a great convulsion in the government offices; but out of doors, and especially in military circles, men said that the new Governor-General was a statesman of the right stamp—bold, vigorous, decided, thoroughly in earnest, no fearer of responsibility—quick to conceive, prompt to execute—just the man to meet with bold comprehensive measures such a crisis as had now arisen. A few sober-minded men of the old school shook their heads, and faltered out expressions of alarm lest the vigour of the new Governor-General should swell into extravagance, and energy get the better of discretion. But no one ever doubted that the leading ideas in the Governor-General's mind were the chastisement of the offending Afghans and the lustration of our national honour.

After a day or two spent at Barrackpore, Lord Ellenborough put himself in his palanquin and proceeded to Allahabad. Halting at Benares, he addressed the Secret Committee on the 21st of April. Much stirring intelligence had met him as he advanced. Good and evil were blended together in the tidings that reached him between Calcutta and Benares. Pollock had entered

the Khybur Pass and forced his way to Ali-Musjid. Sale had defeated Akbar Khan in a general action on the plains of Jellalabad. But England had been beaten back at Hykulzye, and withdrawn his brigade to Quettah. All these things the Governor-General now reported to the Secret Committee, in a despatch which can by no means be regarded as a model of historical truth. Writing again on the following day to the home authorities, he stated that he had "by no means altered his deliberate opinion that it is expedient to withdraw the troops under Major-General Pollock and those under Major-General Nott, at the earliest practicable period, into positions wherein they may have certain and easy communication with India." He had already written to General Nott, instructing him to take immediate measures to withdraw the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzye and evacuate Candahar. "You will evacuate," wrote the Chief Secretary, "the city of Candahar. . . . You will proceed to take up a position at Quettah, until the season may enable you to retire upon Sukkur. The object of the above-directed measure is to withdraw all our forces to Sukkur at the earliest period at which the season and other circumstances may permit you to take up a new position there. The manner of effecting this now necessary object is, however, left to your discretion."* And so the Governor-General, who in Calcutta had determined to "re-establish our military reputation by the infliction of some signal and decisive blow upon the Afghans," could now hardly write a sentence suggestive of anything else but withdrawal and evacuation.

How it happened that, within the space of little more than a month, so great a change had come over the

* *Mr. Maddock to General Nott: April 19, 1842. Published Papers.*

counsels of the Governor-General, it would be difficult to determine, if he himself had not furnished the necessary explanation. "The severe check," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, "experienced by Brigadier England's small corps on the 28th ultimo—an event disastrous as it was unexpected—and of which we have not yet information to enable us to calculate all the results—has a tendency so to cripple the before limited means of movement and of action which were possessed by General Nott, as to render it expedient to take immediate measures for the ultimate safety of that officer's corps, by withdrawing it, at the earliest practicable period, from its advanced position into nearer communication with India."

On this same 19th of April the Governor-General addressed another letter to the Commander-in-Chief, relating to the position of General Pollock. "The only question," wrote the Chief Secretary, "will be, in which position will Major-General Pollock's force remain during the hot months, with most security to itself, and with the least pressure upon the health of the troops? its ultimate retirement within the Indus being a point determined upon, because the reasons for our first crossing the Indus have ceased to exist." The Commander-in-Chief was then directed to issue his own instructions to General Pollock; and another letter was immediately afterwards addressed to him (the third despatched to Sir Jasper Nicolls on this prolific 19th of April), in which, after speaking of the withdrawal orders addressed to Pollock and Nott, the Governor-General goes on to say: "It will, however, likewise be for consideration whether our troops, having been redeemed from the state of peril in which they have been placed in Afghanistan, and it may be still hoped not without

the infliction of some severe blow upon the Afghan army, it would be justifiable again to push them forward for no other object than that of revenging our losses, and of re-establishing, in all its original brilliancy, our military character."

It was Lord Ellenborough's often-declared opinion that "India was won by the sword, and must be maintained by the sword." In his despatch of the 15th of March he had written: "In war, reputation is strength." And yet we now find him questioning the expediency of undertaking operations beyond the Indus with "no other object than that of re-establishing our military character." If we hold India by the sword, and reputation is strength, a statesman need hardly look for any object beyond the establishment of that reputation, which is the strength by which alone our empire in India is maintained.

But England's miscarriage at Hykulzye had not only driven all the forward feeling out of Lord Ellenborough, but had blunted his logical acumen and deadened all his feelings of compassion. He seems to have forgotten that at this time there was a party of English prisoners in the hands of the Afghans—that the generals who had commanded our army at Caubul—the widow of the murdered Envoy—the brave-hearted wife of the commander of the illustrious garrison of Jellalabad—the man who had rescued Herat from the grasp of the Persian, and done the only thing that had yet been done to roll back from the gates of India the tide of Western invasion—with many more brave officers and tender women, were captives in the rude fortresses of the Afghan Sirdars. The Governor-General seems to have forgotten that there were prisoners to be rescued; and he doubted the expediency of undertaking operations merely for the

re-establishment of our military reputation—although upon that reputation, in his own opinion, our tenure of India depended.

The request conveyed to Sir Jasper Nicolls in the government letter of the 19th of April met with prompt compliance; and on the 29th, the Commander-in-Chief, who was then at Simlah, instructed General Pollock to withdraw every British soldier from Jellalabad to Peshawur. "The only circumstances," he added, "which can authorise delay in obeying this order, are: 1st. That you may have brought a negotiation for the release of the prisoners lately confined at Budecabad to such a point that you might risk its happy accomplishment by withdrawing. 2ndly. That you may have attached a lightly equipped force to rescue them. 3rdly. That the enemy at Caubul may be moving a force to attack you. In this improbable case should any respectable number of troops have descended into the plain below Jugduluck with that intent, it would be most advisable to inflict such a blow upon them as to make them long remember your parting effort." Of these instructions the Governor-General "entirely approved;" and on the 6th of May he wrote to General Pollock, saying: "They are in accordance with the general principles laid down by his Lordship for your guidance, and you will execute them to the best of your ability, having regard always to the health of your troops and to the efficiency of your army."

In the interval, however, between the 19th of April and the 6th of May, the Governor-General having somewhat shaken off the uneasy sensation which the disaster at Hykulzye seems to have engendered in his mind, and having arrived at the conclusion that the phantoms which had so intimidated him had not struck terror into the brave heart of General Pollock, had written to the

General, anticipating the possibility of his having advanced upon Caubul.

"The aspect of affairs in Upper Afghanistan," he wrote on the 28th of April, "appears to be such, according to the last advices received by the Governor-General, that his Lordship cannot but contemplate the possibility of your having been led, by the absence of serious opposition on the part of any army in the field, by the divisions amongst the Afghan chiefs, and by the natural desire you must, in common with every true soldier, have of displaying again the British flag in triumph upon the scene of our late disasters, to advance upon and occupy the city of Caubul. If that event should have occurred, you will understand that it will in no respect vary the view which the Governor-General previously took of the policy now to be pursued. The Governor-General will adhere to the opinion, that the only safe course is that of withdrawing the army under your command, at the earliest practicable period, into positions within the Khybur Pass, where it may possess easy and certain communications with India." Why Lord Ellenborough should have entertained a belief even of the possibility of Pollock advancing upon Caubul, in the face of positive instructions to the contrary and a known deficiency of carriage, it is not easy to conjecture. Probably, Lord Ellenborough himself could not have explained the source of this extraordinary buoyancy of expectation, for six days afterwards he declared that he had been led to expect "that you (Pollock) will have already decided upon withdrawing your troops within the Khybur Pass, into a position wherein you may have easy and certain communication with India, if considerations, having regard to the health of the army, should not have induced you to defer that movement." The idea of the advance upon Caubul seems only to have

been a temporary apprehension arising out of a not erroneous estimate of the military aspirations of General Pollock; and it very soon passed away. But it had one important result. It called forth from the General the following soldierly letter:

TO T. H. MADDOCK, ESQ., SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
&c.

Jellalabad, May 13, 1842.

SIR,

I had the honour to forward with my letter No. 32, dated 12th instant, a copy of a letter from his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. I have now the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 28th ultimo, which adverts to the present aspect of affairs in Afghanistan, and the probability of my having advanced towards Caubul; stating also, that in such an event, the views of the Governor-General as to the withdrawal of the troops will not be altered; and further, that whatever measures I may adopt I must have especial regard to the health of the troops. I trust that I am not wrong in considering this letter as leaving to me discretionary powers, and, coming as it does from the supreme power in India, I venture to delay, for some days, acting up to the instructions communicated in his Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's letter, dated 29th ult.

I regret much that a want of carriage-cattle has detained me here; if it had not been so, I should now be several marches in advance, and I am quite certain that such a move would have been highly beneficial. Affairs at Caubul are, at the present moment, in a very unsettled state; but a few days must decide in favour of one of the parties. Mahomed Akbar is at Caubul, exerting all his influence to overpower the Prince. He is without means; and if he cannot within a very short period obtain the ascendancy, he must give up the contest, in which case I have no doubt I shall hear from him again. With regard to our withdrawal at the present moment, I fear that it would have the very worst effect—it would be construed into a defeat, and our character as a powerful nation would be entirely lost in this part of the world.

It is true that the garrison of Jellalabad has been saved, which it would not have been, had a force not been sent to its relief. But the relief of that garrison is only one object; there still re-

main others which we cannot disregard—I allude to the release of the prisoners. I expect about nineteen Europeans from Budeeabad in a few days. The letters which have passed about other prisoners have already been forwarded for the information of his Lordship. If, while these communications were in progress, I were to retire, it would be supposed that a panic had seized us. I therefore think that our remaining in this vicinity (or perhaps a few marches in advance) is essential to uphold the character of the British nation; and in like manner General Nott might hold his post; at all events till a more favorable season.

I have no reason, yet, to complain that the troops are more unhealthy than they were at Agra. If I am to march to Peshawur, the climate is certainly not preferable; and here I can in one or two marches find a better climate, and I should be able to dictate better terms than I could at Peshawur.

I cannot imagine any force being sent from Caubul which I could not successfully oppose. But the advance on Caubul would require that General Nott should act in concert and advance also. I therefore cannot help regretting that he should be directed to retire, which, without some demonstration of our power, he will find some difficulty in doing. I have less hesitation in thus expressing my opinion, because I could not, under any circumstances, move in less than eighteen or twenty days; and your reply might reach me by express in about twenty-two days. The difference in point of time is not very material, but the importance of the subject is sufficient to justify the delay of a few days. In the mean time, I shall endeavour to procure carriage-cattle as fast as I can, to move either forward or backward, as I may be directed; or, if left to my discretion, as I may think judicious. Under any circumstances, I should not advocate the delay of the troops either at Candahar or on this side beyond the month of November; and in this arrangement advertence must be had to the safety of the Khybur, which I consider the Sikhs would gladly hold if they were allowed to take possession of Jellalabad.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

GEORGE POLLOCK, Major-Gen.*

Unwilling to return to the provinces without striking a signal blow at the Afghans, and doing something great

* This is not only a remarkable letter in itself. It is remarkable for its misadventures. Its outer history is somewhat curious. It never found

to re-establish the military reputation of Great Britain in the countries beyond the Indus, Pollock grasped eagerly at the faintest indication of willingness on the part of the Governor-General to place any discretionary power in his hands; and expressed his eagerness to traverse, with a victorious army, the scene of our recent humiliation. If he had had carriage he would have advanced at once; but the want of cattle paralysed the movements of the force, and kept Pollock inactive in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad. In one respect this want was a gain and an advantage. Mindful both of the honour of his country and of the safety of his captive country-men and country-women, Pollock adroitly turned the scarcity of carriage to good account, by declaring

its way into the published volume of correspondence, and its existence was only to be inferred from the fact of a reference to it in another letter. It was at last brought to light by the inquiries in Parliament of Lord Lansdowne and Lord Palmerston. It was to be found nowhere in England; but a copy was at last elicited from India. The Governor-General then declared that "the original despatch of the 13th of May never reached the office, and must have been lost in transit. The duplicate was received and acknowledged on the 11th of July. It is the practice of the Secretary's office to keep the unreported papers on all important subjects for each month together, and to forward copies of them to the Secret Committee by the monthly Overland Mail. The despatch in question was inadvertently put up in its proper place in the May bundle of reported papers, instead of being left for a time, as it should have been, among the unreported papers of July. Hence, when the July papers were copied for transmission to the Secret Committee, this despatch was omitted." Nothing less explanatory than this was ever offered in the way of explanation. It does not appear

whether the original letter miscarried altogether on its way to Lord Ellenborough, or whether it miscarried only on its way to the office. There is an equal obscurity about the history of the duplicate which was "received and acknowledged on the 11th of July." It might be inferred from this that it was received on the 11th of July and acknowledged on the same day. But it happens that the duplicate was despatched on the 30th of May—and ought surely to have come not among the July, but among the June papers. In this letter of the 11th of July the Secretary says: "I am directed to state that the original letter has never reached me, and that the duplicate *has only lately been received* and laid before the Governor-General, whose previous instructions to you appeared to render any special reply to this communication unnecessary."—[*MS. Records.*] In the face of so distinct a denial as this, little can be said, except that in a letter from Pollock of May 20th, which was duly acknowledged, reference is made to the letter of the 13th. If that letter had not been received, some allusion certainly ought to have been made by government to its non-receipt.

that he had not the means of retiring to Peshawur. Thus gaining time for something to be written down in the chapter of accidents, he continued to maintain his advanced position, and exerted himself to secure by negotiation the release of the prisoners from the hands of Akbar Khan.*

In the mean while, the announcement of the Governor-General's determination to withdraw the troops from their advanced positions had reached Candahar. Nott had always consistently declared that he would not yield an inch of ground without the instructions of the Supreme Government, but that, fortified by such instructions, he was prepared to move either in one direction or the other—to abandon all the posts in Western Afghanistan, or to march victoriously on the capital. He had his own opinions on the subject of withdrawal; but the obedience of the soldier was paramount over all his words and actions; and when he received the instructions of which mention has been made, he wrote to the Chief Secretary on the 17th of May: "These measures shall be carried into effect, and the directions of his Lordship accomplished in the best manner circumstances will admit of." And again he wrote on the 21st to the same functionary: "I shall not lose a moment in making all necessary arrangements for carrying into

* There was no scarcity of provisions at Jellalabad at this time. But, to secure a continued supply, Pollock was sensible of the necessity of encouraging a belief throughout the country that the intentions of the British Government inclined towards a forward movement. "We are all quiet here," he wrote on the 6th of May to Mr. Clerk, "grain coming in in abundance; at least, in as great quantities as we could expect after the dreadful alarm into which this force seems to have put the whole country. Every village was deserted.

I did my utmost to protect them from plunder, and in most cases succeeded; and the consequence is that we, in a measure, command the resources of the country." And on the 11th of the same month, writing again to Mr. Clerk, he said: "While I remain here I can command supplies, and I have no doubt that I shall be able to do so as long as the natives suppose that we intend remaining in the country; but if they thought otherwise, our supplies would be stopped."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

effect the orders I have received, without turning to the right or to the left, by the idle propositions and wild speculations daily and hourly heaped upon me from all parts of Afghanistan and Sindh, by persons who are, or fancy themselves to be, representatives of government West of the Indus. I know that it is my duty and their duty implicitly and zealously to carry into effect every order received, without inquiring into the reasons for the measures adopted, whatever our own opinions or wishes may be, and without troubling government with unnecessary references."* But it was plain that he read the orders of the Supreme Government not without acute mortification. He yielded in effect a prompt assent; but in spirit it was a grudging one. The orders for the evacuation of Candahar took Nott and Rawlinson by surprise, and filled them with as much pain as astonishment. What was really felt by the Candahar authorities is not to be learnt from the published papers; but in a letter written by Rawlinson to Outram on the 18th of May, not only are the real feelings of the military and political chiefs clearly revealed, but the probable effects of the evacuation of Candahar sketched out, with a free hand, by the latter:

Candahar, May 18th, 1842.

The peremptory order to retire has come upon us like a thunder-clap. No one at Candahar is aware of such an order having been received except the General and myself, and we must preserve a profound secrecy as long as possible. The withdrawal of the garrison from Kelat-i-Ghilzye and the destruction of the fortifications at that place must, I fancy however, expose our policy, and our situation will then be one of considerable embarrassment.

General Nott intends, I believe, to order all the carriage at Quettah to be sent on to Candahar. A regiment is to escort the

* *Published Correspondence relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*

camels laden with grain to Killah Abdoolah, where the troops will remain in charge of the dépôt, and from whence a regiment or two regiments detached from this will bring on the camels empty to Candahar. It must be our object to collect carriage, on the pretext of an advance on Caubul; but how long the secret can be kept it is impossible to say. When our intended retirement is once known, we must expect to have the whole country up in arms, and to obtain no cattle except such as we can violently lay hands on.

If the worst comes to the worst, we must abandon all baggage and stores, and be content to march with sufficient food to convey us to Quettah, for which I believe the carriage now available will suffice.

It will be quite impossible to destroy the works of Candahar, as directed in the government letter; the worst that can be done is to blow up the gateways. I have hardly yet had time to reflect fully upon the effects, immediate and prospective, of our abrupt departure. There is no man at present on whom I can cast my eyes in all Candahar as likely to succeed to power. Sufder Jung will be a mere puppet of course, and will be liable to deposition at any moment. Should the Barukzyes triumph at Caubul, and should we no longer oppose the return of Kohundil, he will be the most likely chief to succeed; but the natural consequence of his return, and of our determined non-interference with the affair in this quarter, will be of course to render Persian influence paramount at Herat and Candahar; and with the prospect of a Russian fleet at Astrabad and a Persian army at Mervo, it is by no means impossible that the designs which threatened us in 1838 may at last be directly accomplished.

Strong measures of intimidation, both against Russia and Persia, will be our best protection.

I enclose you an extract from my last letter from Sir J. McNeill, in case the copy formerly sent through Hammersley should not have reached you. Saloo Khan appears at last to have fairly adopted our cause, and I hope, therefore, for a time at any rate, that our communications will be less subject to interruption.

Yours, &c.,

H. C. RAWLINSON.*

* *MS. Correspondence.* In his journal, too, Rawlinson wrote: "The order to retire came upon us like a thunderbolt. We had not, from Lord

But however great may have been the mortification which Nott and Rawlinson were now condemned to experience, the orders of the Supreme Government were so explicit, that the General believed it to be his duty at once to begin to carry them into effect. A brigade had already been equipped for the relief of Khelat-i-Ghilzye and the rescue of the Ghuznee prisoners. It was now despatched, on the 19th of May, to bring off the garrison, and to destroy the works of the former place. Colonel Wymer commanded the force. It consisted of those three noble Sepoy regiments with which he had before done such good service,* her Majesty's 40th Regiment, Leslie's troop of Horse Artillery, four guns of Blood's battery, the Bombay cavalry details, and the Shah's 1st Regiment of Horse. Some troopers of Haldane's cavalry, some details of Bengal artillery, and of the Madras sappers, completed the components of the force.

Thus, in the later weeks of May, Pollock was holding his post at Jellalabad, eager to receive authority to march upon Caubul, and rejoicing in the pretext of a scarcity of carriage for delaying the withdrawal of his force; Nott, eager, too, for a forward movement, but unable to perceive in the instructions of government the least indication of an intention to place any discretionary power in his hands, was taking measures to secure, with all promptitude, the accomplishment of their wishes; and the Governor-General, from Allahabad, was writing strong letters to the Generals, impressing upon them the necessity of maintaining a discreet silence regarding the intentions of government and the future movements of the troops.

Ellenborough's former letter, thought such a measure possible until Caubul should be retaken. As there is no discretionary power, however, vested in General Nott by the late letter, he

has only had to consider the best way of carrying the order into effect."

—[*MS. Journal.*]

* The 2nd, 16th, and 38th.

There was nothing, in truth, more desirable than this. The intentions of the Governor-General were of such a character as to render these revelations, in the existing state of things, dangerous, if not fatal, to the interests of Great Britain in the countries beyond the Indus. But official secrets are not easily kept in a country where so many copies of every public letter are forwarded to different authorities, in distant parts of the country; where so many clerks are employed to copy, and so many staff-officers allowed to read them. Before the end of May, it was known not only in General Pollock's camp, but in all the cantonments of India, that the armies were to be withdrawn. The secret had welled out from the bureau of the Commander-in-Chief; and bets were made at the mess-tables of Jellalabad regarding the probable date of the withdrawal of the troops. No man knew better than Pollock the danger of such revelations,* and he did his best to counteract the evil tendency of the reports which were now the common gossip of his camp, and were soon likely to be current in all the Afghan bazaars. "I have taken steps," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief, "to prevent any great mischief resulting, by ordering the deputy-quarter-master-general a few miles in advance, to mark out a new encamping-ground; and I shall have such inquiries made among the natives about bringing supplies there, that will make them believe that I shall move forward."

* "In a late letter to government," he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief on the 24th of May, "you will have seen how anxious I was that any proposed movement towards Peshawur should be communicated to no one from whom it could be withheld. The moment such a thing is known, it is probable supplies will

cease to come in; we should be in difficulty about forage; all who are now friendly would be ready to oppose us; and if I had not time to secure the pass, the consequences might be serious indeed."—[*Published Papers relating to Military Operations in Afghanistan.*]

And Pollock still hoped that something might arise to wring from the Governor-General an order to march upon the Afghan capital. But the letters he received from Lord Ellenborough and Sir Jasper Nicolls were calculated not only to discourage but to embarrass him. There was no possibility of misunderstanding the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief; but the Governor-General, whilst imperatively directing the speediest possible withdrawal of Pollock's army, was every now and then throwing out a hint that a forward movement for the chastisement of the Afghans would not be ungrateful to him. And whilst the Governor-General was obviously intending to place some discretionary power in the General's hands, the Commander-in-Chief was writing to assure him that the orders of the Supreme Government all tended towards an immediate and unconditional withdrawal.

The letter of the 13th of May elicited no answer; but a letter written a week afterwards,* in which Pollock pointed out the evils and difficulties of an immediate withdrawal to Peshawur, found the Governor-General in one of his more forward and chivalrous moods. Pollock, in this letter of the 20th of May, had said: "I shall be glad if any letter from government may authorise my remaining till October or November;" and now, on the 1st of June, the Governor-General, through the Chief Secretary, replied: "It would be desirable, undoubtedly, that before finally quitting Afghanistan, you should have an opportunity of striking a blow at the enemy; and since circumstances seem to compel you to remain there till October, the Governor-

* In this letter of the 20th of May, Pollock says: "I have already, in my letter dated the 13th inst., entered on the subject (of withdrawing to Peshawur), and must receive a reply before I shall be able to move." If that letter of the 13th had not been received and read, surely this allusion to it would have called forth a remark to that effect.

General earnestly hopes that you may be enabled to draw the enemy into a position in which you may strike such a blow effectually." And again, in the same letter: "It will be for your consideration whether your large army, one half of which would beat, in open field, everything that could be brought against it in Afghanistan, should remain entirely inactive during the period which must now apparently elapse before it can finally retire. Although you may not have, or soon be able to procure, the means of moving your whole army, you may possibly be able to move a part of it rapidly against some portion of the enemy's force incautiously exposed, and of giving it a severe blow." This was, at all events, something gained. And the gain was a sudden one. Only three days before, the Governor-General, in a letter to Pollock, had resented the presumption of Mr. Clerk in drawing from a former letter an inference in favour of the continued occupation of Jellalabad, in the event of negotiations being on foot for the release of the prisoners, and had expressed a strong opinion that no negotiations had yet been entered upon of a nature to impede the backward movement of the force. The letter of the 1st of June was, therefore, doubly welcome. Pollock had now received a constructive permission to remain at Jellalabad until October,* and, as every effort was to be made in the interval to collect carriage-cattle in the provinces of Hindostan, ostensibly for the purpose of his withdrawal from Afghanistan, he determined to lose no opportunity of turning those means of withdrawal to the best possible

* It was outwardly only an acknowledgment of the General's inability to retire at an earlier period—but there was more meaning in it than this, for on the same day the Chief Secretary wrote to Nott: "I am directed to inform you that, in

consequence of the very defective state of the means of movement possessed by Major-General Pollock, it appears to be out of his power to retire from Jellalabad until October, when his retirement will certainly take place."—[*Published Papers.*]

account. If there were carriage to enable him to fall back upon Peshawur, there would be carriage to enable him to advance upon Caubul, for the mistake of hiring cattle, with local limitations affixed to the engagements, was not to be perpetuated. So General Pollock looked forward with confidence to the coming autumn, as to a time when a vigorous and decisive blow might be struck at the nation which had humbled the pride and defiled the honour of the conquerors of Hindostan.

Patiently, therefore, biding his time, Pollock turned the halt at Jellalabad to the best possible account, by endeavouring to obtain by negotiation the ransom of the British prisoners. What those negotiations were, and what was their result, should be stated in this place. It was on the evening of the 25th of April that some excitement was created in Pollock's camp at Jellalabad, by rumours, presently confirmed, of the arrival of Captain Colin Mackenzie, one of the prisoners in the hands of Akbar Khan, with a letter from Major Pottinger, and overtures from the Sirdar. Pottinger's letter briefly shadowed forth the terms on which Akbar Khan and his Ghilzye confederates were prepared to release the prisoners—but the language employed was rather that of inquiry than dictation. "The Sirdar," wrote Pottinger, "wishes to know, in the first place, if we will consent to withdraw the greater part of our troops, and leave an agent with a small body of men to act with whomever the confederates may elect as chief, in which case they propose to be guided by the wishes of the two factions in Caubul, and wish us to release Dost Mahomed Khan. *Secondly*;—They propose, that if the British Government have determined on subjecting the country and continuing the war, that the prisoners at present in Afghanistan shall be exchanged for Dost Mahomed Khan, his family and attendants, and that the issue be dependent

on the sword. *Thirdly*;—In the event of neither of these propositions being approved of, they wish to know what terms will be granted to themselves individually; whether we, in the event of their submission, will confine them, send them to India, take hostages from them, reduce their pay, or, in short, what they have to expect from our clemency.”*

To this General Pollock replied, that “kindness and good treatment of our prisoners would meet with due consideration at the hands of the British Government, and the release of them much more so; that if money were a consideration, he was prepared to pay into the hands of any one the Sirdar might depute to receive it the sum of two lakhs of rupees, whenever the prisoners might be delivered into his hands;” and that Mahomed Shah Khan and his brothers would be “suffered to enjoy the advantages arising from their hereditary dominions.”†

With this letter Mackenzie left Jellalabad on the evening of the 28th of April. He had been instructed by the Sirdar to ascertain, if possible, from General

* *Major Pottinger to General Pollock: Tezzen, April 20, 1842. Published Papers.* Together with this letter from Pottinger came a paper from Akbar Khan himself. It was without seal and signature, for the Sirdar was fearful of compromising himself with his countrymen, and the document might have fallen into their hands. After some allusions to the painful past, and a declaration that he was unable to restrain the disorganised mob of Afghans from attacking the English army, the Sirdar went on to say: “If I allow the English, who are my guests, to depart according to your suggestion; or according to Pottinger Sahib’s advice, if I allow the English ladies to depart before the gentlemen, in either case all Mahomedans will look upon me

as their enemy, and the whole multitude will be opposed to me. Under these circumstances I beg you to reflect, that not having come to an understanding with you, and having made enemies of them, how can I exist? . . . I prefer your friendship to the throne of Caubul, because, if I was to go to Caubul now, the men of Caubul would push me forward, and then it would be difficult to release my guests and to be on friendly terms with you. On this account I have written to show my friendship for your government. Please God my services shall exceed the injuries I have done you.”

† *General Pollock to Major Pottinger: Jellalabad, April 26, 1842. Published Papers.*

Pollock whether there was any chance of the British Government admitting him to terms, on his own account, if he would detach himself from the national cause, and exert his influence to advance our interests in Afghanistan. But upon this Pollock could express no definite opinion. "His position," wrote the General to the Supreme Government, "is evidently different from the others. That he was the murderer of the Envoy there cannot be a question, and he evidently feels his guilt to be an insuperable bar to any terms from us; but he also feels that he has possession of the persons of our countrymen, and that circumstance seems to hold out to him a hope that his proffers of submission will meet with a favorable reception."*

The reply of General Pollock to the overtures of Akbar Khan disappointed the Sirdar; and Captain Mackenzie was again despatched to Jellalabad. This time he was the bearer of a string of proposals far more extravagant than those which had been conveyed by him on his first mission. The requests of the Barukzye chief, as set forth in Pottinger's letter to the General, were—

1stly. That a written promise of amnesty be given to himself, Mahomed Shah Khan, and the latter's family, for all past acts up to the date of delivery. 2ndly. That neither he nor any of the above-mentioned family shall be sent out of the Caubul and Jellalabad districts against their wishes. 3rdly. That they may not be obliged to pay their respects to you in our camp till they be assured against any danger. 4thly. If we merely intend to

* *General Pollock to Government: Jellalabad, April 28, 1842.* In reply to this letter, the Chief Secretary wrote: "It is not consistent with the honour of the British Government to enter into any terms for the making of a provision for so great a criminal. We might engage to spare his life if he were to fall into our hands, because it would be difficult so to bring him to trial as to protect the government from a colourable charge of violently prosecuting an unworthy revenge; but no more than this can be done, and this only if he should promptly do all he can to repair the crimes he has committed."—[*Published Papers.*]

revenge ourselves on the enemy, and then leave the country, he trusts its government will be conferred on him. 5thly. He wants a jaghire to support his family, and he names two lakhs as adequate. 6thly. He wants eight lakhs of rupees as a present to start him with. (His great fear, as it is of all Afghans, is of being removed from this country.) He also asks for his own women, who are in his father's *harem-serai*. They have asked for the money, if it is paid, to be given to Sir-Bolund Khan, who will remain as a hostage till the prisoners are delivered, or that you pay it to Hindoos, who can empower their agents in Caubul to pay it on delivery of the prisoners.*

To these proposals Pollock replied:

With regard to the first, it follows as a matter of course that, whenever we agree to any terms, amnesty for the past will result.

The second request, about residing at Caubul and Jellalabad, is out of place now; it must depend upon contingencies, and be discussed only after other and more important points have been agreed upon.

With reference to the third request, the Sirdar Mahomed Akbar may be assured that I would guarantee his personal safety whenever he may visit my camp; but his doing so would require some preliminary arrangement, unless he voluntarily claims our protection, in which case I could immediately arrange for his safety, and appeal to the government on his behalf.

The fourth request refers to matters entirely depending on future results, and which are known to God alone. It would therefore be vain to speculate on them at this stage of our negotiation.

With regard to the fifth and sixth requests, I have already told you that I suppose the Sirdar rests his claim to any present on his delivering up the prisoners, which, as I have before stated, will be the best evidence of good faith, and a sincere wish for

* *Major Pottinger to General Pollock: May 3, 1842.* I have quoted from the original in Pottinger's handwriting. But the letter is given among the published papers, with the usual official emendations. Thus the passage, "They have asked for the money, if it is paid, to be given to Sir-Bolund Khan" — is printed, "They have asked for the money, &c., to be given to his Colund Khan." It may puzzle the future historian to discover who "his Colund Khan" may have been.

favorable terms with the British Government. I have accordingly already mentioned the sum of two lakhs of rupees. The Sirdar Mahomed Akbar must recollect that he is desirous of obtaining the females of his own family. The British Government will not require any money to be paid on their account; and I hereby guarantee that, on all the prisoners being delivered over to me, I will write to India for the women of the Sirdar Mahomed Akbar, and I have no doubt that my request will be complied with.

As to the payment of the money for the prisoners now with, or in the power of Mahomed Akbar, it shall be made to any person the Sirdar may appoint to receive it, or it shall be paid to Hindoos who can give bills on Caubul. The good faith and honour of the British nation is not doubted, and I therefore hereby pledge myself to pay the two lakhs of rupees on account of government whenever the prisoners are made over to me.*

Mackenzie took his departure with these replies. There was stirring work, at this time, for Akbar Khan at Caubul; and the negotiations had no result. But the

* *General Pollock to Major Pottinger: Jellalabad, May 10, 1842. Published Papers.* Lord Ellenborough was unwilling that any money should be paid for the release of the captives; but was inclined to exchange Dost Mahomed and his family for the prisoners in the hands of the Sirdar. "Undoubtedly," he wrote, "on the 26th of April, you remained authorised, by the instructions of the 24th of February, to give money on the public account for the release of individual prisoners; and if, previously to the receipt of my letter of the 25th of April, you should have concluded a negotiation for the release of any individual prisoners on that condition, the Governor-General would feel himself under the necessity of sanctioning any payment of money to which you may have then pledged yourself. After the receipt of that letter, you will, of course, in any future negotiation, have adhered to the instructions contained in it. It cannot but be a subject of much regret that

you should have considered it to be necessary, under any circumstances, to have had any communication whatever of a diplomatic nature with Mahomed Akbar Khan, in whom it must be impossible for any one to place any trust."—[*Published Papers.*] Akbar Khan, at this time, seems almost to have considered the release of his father and family as hopeless; and Pollock did not think he was authorised to propose an exchange of prisoners; for although, on the 24th of February, Lord Auckland suggested that he "might speak of the release of Dost Mahomed as an event which might not be altogether impossible," he did not know how far such a measure might be sanctioned by Lord Ellenborough. Moreover, Pollock believed that the exchange had only been authorised in the event of his being able to treat for the release of the whole of the British prisoners; and they were not all in the hands of Akbar Khan.

visits of the British officer to Jellalabad had not been without their uses. Mackenzie had been the bearer of much information of the deepest interest, and had placed many valuable documents in the hands of General Pollock. The General had laid before him a string of questions relative to the causes and progress of the insurrection at Caubul, the answers to which, in the existing state of information even in the best-informed quarters, threw a flood of light upon many dark points of recent history. And whilst in official places many important revelations were made, all through the general camp there transpired, in time, from the same source, much that was eagerly sought, eagerly discussed when found, and eagerly transmitted to every cantonment in India, where the fate of the captives in the hands of Akbar Khan was a matter of the liveliest concernment, and a source of the most painful alarm.*

* The questions were—1st. "What were the terms negotiated by Sir W. Macnaghten with the rebels? 2nd. What alteration was made by Major Pottinger? 3rd. What does Major Pottinger allude to when he talks of breach of faith? 4th. What were the manner and causes of Sir W. Macnaghten's murder?" I have found the information conveyed in Captain Mackenzie's answers of some use in the course of my narrative.

CHAPTER IV.

[January—April: 1842.]

The Captivity—Surrender of the Married Families—Their Journey to Tezzen—Proceed to Tugree—Interviews between Pottinger and Akbar Khan—Removal to Budeeabad—Prison Life—Removal to Zanda—Death of General Elphinstone.

FEW were the letters which Mackenzie brought from his fellow-captives to their friends at Jellalabad. There may have been state reasons for the secrecy which enveloped his movements; but to all parties the disappointment was great. Every one at Jellalabad was eager for intelligence regarding the incidents which had befallen the little band of prisoners, and for particulars of all the daily environments of their captive state. All through the camp ran eager inquiries; and little by little the much-coveted information began to radiate from the General's tent, and to diffuse itself in more remote quarters. What was then told in mere outline may here be given more in detail.

It was on the 9th of January that the married families were made over to the protection of Mahomed Akbar Khan. The following day was spent by them in a small fort, where they found Pottinger, Lawrence, and Mackenzie, who had been surrendered as hostages at

Boot-Khak. Rude as was the accommodation, and untempting as was the fare, that were here offered them, after the miseries and privations of the retreat through the snowy passes, the "small dark hovels" in which they were crowded together were a very palace, and the "greasy palao" in which they dipped their fingers was regal fare. They slept that night on the bare ground—but there was a roof between them and the open sky; and they thought little of the smoke, which almost suffocated them, whilst in the enjoyment of the reviving warmth of a wood fire.*

On the morning of the 11th, through scenes of unexampled horror, the party of captives were conducted to the Tezeen fort. The road was strewn with the stark bodies of the mangled dead. Here and there little groups of wretched camp-followers, starving, frost-bitten, many of them in a state of gibbering idiocy were to be seen cowering in the snow; or solitary men, perhaps wounded and naked, were creeping out of their hiding-places, in an extremity of mortal suffering and fear. The sickening smell of death rose from the bloody corpses through which our English ladies guided their horses, striving not to tread upon the bodies,† or in their camel-panniers jolted and stumbled over the obstructing carrion. Happy were they all, when, about the hour of evening prayer, that dreadful journey was at an end, and the fort of Tezeen appeared in sight. There they were hospitably received—and there an-

* On that day Akbar Khan sought an interview with Lady Macnaghten. Painful as such a meeting must have been, the bereaved widow was not in a position to refuse to see her husband's murderer. He spoke very kindly to her; and as she sate in silent sorrow before him, declared that he would give his right arm that

the deed which he so much regretted might be undone.

† "The sight was dreadful; the smell of the blood sickening; and the corpses lay so thick it was impossible to look from them, as it required care to guide my horse so as not to tread upon the bodies." — [*Lady Sale's Journal.*]

other captive was added to their number. Lieutenant Melville, of the 54th Native Infantry, who had been wounded on the retreat, and whose wounds had been bound up by the hand of Akbar Khan himself, was waiting their arrival in the fort.*

On the following day they were carried to Seh-Baba; and the same dreadful scenes of carnage sickened them as they went along. On the march another prisoner, and a welcome one, was added to the party—one whom the sick and wounded had much wanted—a medical officer, Dr. Macgrath.† On the 13th, partly over remote mountain paths, so precipitous that the camels could scarcely keep their footing, and partly along the bloody track of our slaughtered army, the captive band were escorted to Jugdulluck. Here three ragged tents had been pitched for their reception. Here they found General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and Captain Johnson, who had been claimed as hostages by Akbar Khan; and here they learnt that all the soldiers and camp-followers who had left Caubul, with the exception of this little handful of prisoners, had, in all probability, been annihilated on the march.‡

* "The column passed on, and I had not been there five minutes ere a horseman rode up, who had accompanied Captain Skinner from his interview with the Sirdar, and offered me a 'nan' (a native loaf) for a rupee. This I wanted not; but I bought and gave it to a poor European struggling on. I then offered the man seven rupees (being all I had) if he would mount me before him, and take me to the Sirdar. This he agreed to do, and placing me before him on his saddle, he proceeded. About a quarter of a mile in rear of the baggage we met the Sirdar and his followers, who received me most kindly. He laid me down on a bank, and with his own hands dressed my wounds, by placing on them burnt lint to stanch the blood. He then

mounted me behind a follower, and having put a turban on my head, and given me a posteen, made me proceed by his side."—[*Lieut. Melville's Narrative.*]

† "Mr. Macgrath had several narrow escapes; and when surrounded by Ghilzye footmen with their long knives drawn, owed his life in a great measure to an Afghan horseman, who recognised him as having shown some little kindness to some of his sick friends at Caubul."—[*Lady Sale's Journal.*]

‡ "Every attention," says Captain Johnson, in his journal, "which circumstances admitted of, had been paid to the ladies and gentlemen; nor had they met with the slightest annoyance on the road."

Next morning they resumed their journey—the General, the Brigadier, and Captain Johnson, accompanied by Akbar Khan, bringing up the rear. A more rugged and difficult road had seldom been travelled over. The ascents and descents were seemingly impracticable; it made the travellers giddy to look at them. The road was “one continuation of rocks and stones, over which the camels with the greatest difficulty scrambled” with their burdens.* At night they bivouacked on the banks of the Punshuhur river. There were no tents, no shelter of any kind for the ladies. So they rolled themselves up in their warmest garments, laid their heads upon their saddles, and composed themselves, as best they could, to sleep.

Early in the morning of the 15th of January they crossed the deep and rapid fords of the Punshuhur river.

* *Captain Johnson's Journal.* The writer adds: “At the commencement of the defile, and for some considerable distance, passed two or three hundreds of our poor miserable Hindostanees, who had escaped up this unfrequented road from the massacre of the 12th. They had not a rag to cover them, and were all more or less frost-bitten, wounded, or starving. The poor wretches were huddled together in thirties and forties, so as to impart to each other a little animal heat, as other warmth was denied them by the barren, inhospitable wilderness around them. We afterwards learnt that scarcely one of these poor wretches escaped from the defile in which they had taken shelter; and that, driven to the extremes of hunger, some of them had, for a few short hours, sustained life by feeding on their dead comrades. The wind was blowing bitterly cold at our bivouac. No shelter of any kind for the ladies of our party during the whole night. Happiness is comparative; and truly fortunate did General Elphinstone, Brigadier Shelton, and myself consider ourselves when one

of our Afghan attendants told us to accompany him inside a miserable cow-shed, which on our first entrance was so blackened with the dense smoke from a good blazing fire in the centre of the hut, that we could see none of the objects around us, until we had stretched ourselves at length on the floor, and consequently out of the influence of the smoke, when we perceived our companions to be three or four half-starved Hindostanees, who had accompanied our party. Our attendant wished to eject them; but we too truly sympathised with their sufferings to permit such an act of tyranny. We shortly afterwards got an invitation from Mahomed Akbar to join him and his party to dinner inside the fort. The room of our reception was not much better than that we had left. We had, however, a capital dinner, some cups of good tea, and a luxurious rest for the night, the room having been heated with a good blazing fire and lots of smoke, with no outlet for either, except the door and a small hole in the roof.”—[*MS.*]

The passage was not accomplished without difficulty and danger; but the active kindness of the Afghan Sirdars availed to escort the party over in safety.* A bitterly cold wind was blowing as they passed; and a few followers and cattle were lost. Proceeding then in a north-easterly direction, they made their way over a barren, inhospitable country, where neither grass nor water was to be seen, into the fertile valley of Lughman; and halted in the vicinity of the Tugree fort. The following day was the Sabbath. A day's halt had been determined upon; and it fell, by a happy accident, on the Christian's day of rest. A Bible and Prayer-book had been "picked up on the field at Boot-Khak;" and the service of the Church of England was read to the little band of prisoners. It is easy to imagine with what deep emotion they must have joined in the prayer beseeching the Almighty to have mercy "upon all prisoners and captives."

On the morning of the 17th they were again upon the move.† Tugree is only thirty miles distant from

* Captain Johnson says in his journal, "Both Mahomed Akbar and his chiefs were most attentive in escorting over in safety the ladies and their children and wounded Europeans." There is other testimony to the same effect: "Many of the ladies, being mounted on ponies, were obliged to dismount and ride astride on the chargers of their Afghan acquaintance, to avoid getting wet. Nothing could exceed the politeness and attention of Mahomed Akbar on this occasion, who manifested the greatest anxiety until all had crossed over in safety."—[*Eyre's Rough Notes of Imprisonment in Afghanistan*.] "The chiefs gave us every assistance. Mahomed Akbar Khan carried Mrs. Waller over behind him on his own horse. One rode by me to keep my horse's head

well up the stream. The Afghans made great exertions to save both men and animals struggling in the water."—[*Lady Sale's Journal*.]

† "Jan. 17, 1842.—Early in the morning we were, to our surprise, told to prepare for a march higher up the valley, and further removed from Jellalabad, from which place Tugree is about thirty miles distant. All our hopes, which we had entertained hitherto of being escorted to Jellalabad, are now blighted, and we see plainly that we are nothing more nor less than prisoners, until such time as General Sale shall evacuate Jellalabad, or Dost Mahomed Khan be permitted by our government to return to the country. Started at nine, and arrived at Budecabad, almost at the top of the valley, and close to the first range of hills towards Kafiristan. It

Jellalabad; and up to this time a faint hope had been encouraged by the captives that they were to be escorted to that place. But now an order came for them "to prepare for a march higher up the valley," and in a different direction. It was now found that their destination was the fort of Budeeabad. This was to be their resting-place. It had been recently erected; and was the property of Mahomed Shah Khan, the father-in-law of the Sirdar. Five rooms, composing two sides of an inner square, or citadel, were allotted to the British prisoners. The buildings were "intended for the chief and his favourite wife,"* and it may therefore be presumed that they afforded the best accommodation in the place. The party consisted of nine ladies, twenty gentlemen, and fourteen children. Seventeen European soldiers, two European women and a child, were located in another part of the fort.

On that night of the 17th of January Pottinger and Akbar Khan were in close and earnest conversation. The Sirdar entered on the subject of his father's release; and asked the English officer if he would guarantee an interchange of prisoners and the evacuation of Jellalabad. Pottinger could only answer that he was a prisoner and powerless; and could give no promises with any certainty of their being performed. But he undertook to write to Macgregor on the subject; and to urge him to lay the wishes of the Sirdar before the Supreme Government.† It appeared to Pottinger that

belongs to Mahomed Shah Khan, is nearly new, and has a deep ditch and *fausse-braie* all round it. Our abode consists of five rooms on two sides of a small square. This space is to accommodate nine ladies, twenty gentlemen, and fourteen children, and in the Tei-Khana are seventeen European soldiers and three European women—all prisoners."—

[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

* *Lady Sale's Journal.*

† "Last night, Mahomed Akbar and I had a long conversation. He was very anxious for the release of his father, and made many promises in his name if we would release him. I pointed out that at least two months must elapse before we could in any

no more expedient course could be adopted than that involving a general interchange of prisoners and the restoration of the country to Dost Mahomed Khan.

Ostensibly for the purpose of proceeding southward for the reduction of Jellalabad, Akbar Khan took his departure on the following day; and the captives began to settle down into the monotony of prison-life. In this place they continued to reside for nearly three months. The incidents of captivity, during this period, were not many, or very memorable. Here for the first time, after the lapse of a fortnight, they were able to change their clothes.* Clean linen was very scarce; and the nice sensibilities of delicate English ladies were outraged by the appearance of nauseous vermin. The food that was served out to them was not of the most luxurious description. It consisted of rice, mutton, and thick cakes of unleavened dough, prepared by the Afghan cooks in a manner little relished by English palates.† Captain Lawrence acted as the steward of the captive party, and divided the supplies, whether they were the daily food of the prisoners, or parcels

way have the instructions of government regarding the release of the Ameer. I can see no objection to the release of the Ameer, unless government intends making an example of the city of Caubul. Our release and that of the hostages at Caubul appears to depend upon his release. His family's release requires that of the women here. I wish for these last something could be done; but I fear not. You must use your influence. They tell me we shall be forwarded to Peshawur if you evacuate Jellalabad; and the Sirdar begs me that I write you on the subject. I have explained that I have no authority now, and said that I cannot promise anything of the sort. I hope government will see nothing

prejudicial to its interests to release the Dost and family."—[*Major Pottinger to Major Macgregor: Lughman, January 18, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

* January 19.—Changed my clothes for the first time since leaving Caubul, January 6, and was fortunate enough to have a clean shirt. My feet had become so swollen that I could not again put on my boots when once pulled off. My eyes still very sore from the effects of the snow on the march."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

† Subsequently the materials were served out to the prisoners and dressed by their own Hindostanee servants.

of clothes, money,* and other equally acceptable presents sent them either by their Afghan captors or their friends at Jellalabad.

There was nothing very painful in their captivity. They were not suffered to wander far from their prison-house; but within its walls they found both occupation and amusement, and the time passed at Budceabad is not now, in the retrospect, the saddest of their lives. They had among them a few books; some had been brought for sale by natives of the country, who had picked them up on the road traversed by the army on its retreat; others had been forwarded by friends at Jellalabad. Now and then a stray newspaper came in from that place. It is hard to say how greedily its contents were devoured, and how eagerly they were discussed. Sometimes letters were received from below; there was a good deal of cypher-correspondence between the prisoners and Sale's garrison,† and many long letters were written to friends in India or in England, to be despatched when opportunity might offer. Then there were amongst them two or three packs of old playing cards—dirty and limp, but not the less serviceable for these conventional defects. Some rude backgammon and drafts boards had been constructed for prison service; and there was quite enough elasticity of spirits left

* "January 29.—The Sirdar and Sooltan Jan came to see us. Made a bet with the latter of 1000 rupees that Dost Mahomed Khan, the ex-Ameer, will be released by the 30th of January, and will return to Afghanistan. The former gave 1000 rupees to be distributed among us for the purpose of purchasing sugar and other little luxuries. My share is fifty rupees; which sum is very acceptable, as I have not had a *pice* about me since leaving Caubul."—*[Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.]*

† It was dangerous to send mili-

tary or political news in the ordinary form of epistolary correspondence. So the officers at Jellalabad hit upon the expedient of dotting off letters in old newspapers, so as to form words and sentences—"an easy mode of carrying on secret correspondence not likely to be detected by an Asiatic." These dotted letters communicated to the prisoners the tidings of Wild's repulse in the Khybur Pass—the despatch of General Pollock to Peshawur—and the arrival of Dr. Brydon at Jellalabad.

among the captives to render them not disinclined for more active and boisterous sports. They played at "hop-skotch;" they played at "blind-man's buff." A favourite game among them was the latter; and when some ten or fifteen healthy and cheerful little boys and girls joined in the sport, the mirth ran fast and furious. A Christmas party in old England seldom sees madder gambols than these—seldom has the heart's laughter risen more freely from a band of merrier children than those who romped with their elders in prison at Budecabad.

The Sabbaths were always kept holy. Every Sunday saw the little party of Christian prisoners assembled for the worship of their God. Sometimes in the open air, sometimes in tents, in huts, or any other place available for the purpose, Sunday after Sunday, the Church Service was read to as devout a band of worshippers as ever assembled to render thanks to the Almighty and to implore the continuance of His mercies. Nor were these observances lost upon their guards. Wild and savage as were their keepers, they seemed to respect the Christian's day of rest. There was more decorum in their demeanour, more courtesy in their manner, than on the working-days of the week. An atmosphere of peace and rest seemed to envelop them on that sacred day.

On the 23rd of January, Akbar Khan, accompanied by Sooltan Jan, returned to Budecabad. The object of his visit was to induce Pottinger to write to Macgregor at Jellalabad, stating the terms on which the Sirdar was willing to treat with the British for the release of the prisoners. The letter was duly written;* but Pottinger

* It ran in the following words: "Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan has been with us to-day; and from what I can learn, it seems that Shah Soojah has entirely thrown us overboard, and is about to proceed to open war with us; and the following appears to be the grounds on which he wishes to treat. The agreement he wishes us to enter into is, that if Shah Soojah, or any of Shah Soojah's sons in enmity to the English may send an army to attack Jellalabad, it will thus become evident that the

repeated that he had no hope of the surrender of Jelalabad; and added, that he advised the Sirdar not to attack it lest a war should be commenced of which it was difficult to see the end. Pottinger believed that the Sirdar was sincere in his expressions of a desire to establish friendly relations with the British. "But," he added, "he has been brought up in the midst of treachery, and does not know how to trust; and I regret that our own conduct in this country has put our government's faith on a par with themselves. Our defeat, though sufficiently galling to a soldier, really loses its sting when the taunts of our broken promises, which we know to be true, are thrown in our teeth by men who know the truth only by name."*

King is the enemy of the English; and the English will treat him as such—and then Sirdar Mahomed Akbar Khan will be considered the friend of the English, who will act according to his wishes with respect to this country, and will release the Ameer Dost Mahomed Khan with all his family, and send them to this country with all honour and respect, and will restore him to his government, in the same manner as they took it from him to give it to Shah Soojah; but will leave to the Ameer and Sirdar Mahomed Khan the full control of the people and government; and if any enemy attack the government thus established, the British Government will aid it with either money or an army, and the friends of the one government will be the friends of the other. The agreement which the Sirdar will enter into is this, that he will hereafter be the friend of the English; but that at present, to prevent himself being abused by his people, he must proceed to close the Khybur Pass against the approach of the English army; but he will not attempt to attack Jellalabad before the arrival of Shah Soojah's son and army; and after

their arrival he will use every endeavour to secretly aid the garrison until the arrival of his father and family."—[*Major Pottinger to Major Macgregor: Bulecabad, January 23, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*]

* *Major Pottinger to Major Macgregor: Bulecabad, January 30, 1842. MS. Correspondence.* From Major Pottinger's letters written about this time, his real opinion of the conduct of Akbar Khan can only be extracted by ascertaining the circumstances under which the different letters were written—some of them having been written at the request of the Sirdar himself. There are two letters of January 23, one of an official tendency, quoted above—the other of a more private and more genuine character, in which the writer says: "He" (Akbar Khan) "sent out the day before yesterday a Persian letter for me to send to you in English; I wrote a letter telling you the meaning, which he sent back to-day, and requesting me to give him an exact copy of his own. I have done so it is true; but I fancy his humanity was only a sham, and every sinew was strained to destroy our poor fellows. He has, however, treated us personally

About the middle of the month of February the captive party was increased by the arrival of Major Griffiths and Captain Souter; and a few days afterwards, the same terrific earthquake which had shaken down the ramparts of Jellalabad made the walls of their prison-house reel and totter, and levelled a portion of the fort with the dust.* For many days lesser shocks of earthquake kept the people in a continued state of alarm. The prisoners slept in the open court-yard, which was filled with their beds; and all kinds of rude awnings were thrown up to secure a little privacy. The cold was intense, and the heavy dews saturated the bedding like rain. No lives were sacrificed within the fort by this great convulsion of nature; but narrow was

well, and very much so."—[*MS. Correspondence.*] "The despatch of these private letters was discovered by the Sirdar, who is said to have disarmed all the prisoners in consequence of this discovery."—[*Iyre.*]

* "February 19.—At about eleven we were visited by the most fearful earthquake within the memory of any man in this country. The day was beautifully clear, and nothing indicated the approach of such a visitation. Most of us were inside our rooms, when we heard a heavy rumbling noise, as of thousands of heavy carriages. This was immediately succeeded by a heaving of the earth, which caused a rocking of the walls, and made us all rush out into the court-yard, which we had no sooner entered than the shock, which had ceased for an instant, again came on with a hundred-fold violence. The high massive walls, by which we were surrounded, heaved to and fro most fearfully, whilst we, for security, huddled together as closely as we possibly could in the centre of the square, where there was a deep wood cellar. All of a sudden there was a frightful crash around us; and the earth heaved up and down to such a degree that we could scarcely stand. The crash was succeeded by

a dense cloud of dust, which, for five or six seconds, prevented our seeing the amount of injury done. The walls of the wood cellar fell in. The earth around us was giving way; and we were afraid to move to the right or left, as it would bring us within range of the walls which were falling on both sides of us. The shock had now expended itself. The dust cleared away. And we then saw that our out-houses and the roof of one of our sleeping-rooms tumbled in. The upper parts of the walls were down, and those portions which still remained were either thrown out of their perpendicular or had large rents in them. God grant we may never again experience such a visitation. On the shock ceasing, we went outside the fort, and frightful was the devastation. The whole valley was one cloud of dust. Almost every part had been either wholly or partially destroyed—and great was the loss of life. Even mountains did not escape; and fearful were the crashes of huge rocks, as they were precipitated with awful violence to the plains below. We had shocks at least a dozen times during the day—but none of so alarming a nature as the first."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

the escape both of Lady Sale and General Elphinstone. The former was on the house-top when the shock commenced; and had scarcely time to secure a footing on a safer spot when the roof fell in with a crash. The poor, old General was bed-ridden. His sufferings had been every day increasing. He had been wounded on the retreat. His constitutional infirmities had been aggravated both by the external hardships to which he had been subjected, and the corroding anxieties which had preyed upon his mind. It was plain to all that his end was approaching. But he bore his accumulated sufferings with heroic fortitude; and the warmest sympathies of his fellow-captives were with him. Unable to bestir himself, when the walls of the fort were shaken by the earthquake, he was for a little time in imminent peril; but a soldier of the 44th, named Moore, who had acted as the General's personal attendant, rushed into the room and carried off the attenuated old man in his arms. "The poor General," says Eyre, who records this incident, "was greatly beloved by the soldiery, of whom there were few who would not have acted in a similar manner to save his life."

The month of March passed quietly over the heads of the captives. There was little to mark the monotony of prison-life. Good and bad tidings came in by turns. All sorts of rumours were in circulation, and all were volubly discussed. About the middle of the month, the Nazir, or steward, in charge of the prisoners, announced that Mahomed Shah Khan was willing to release them all for two lakhs of rupees. The proposition was made to Captain Johnson, who convened a meeting of the gentlemen. The offer was a tempting one, and it might have been accepted; but Pottinger protested against it. He was unwilling to aid the enemy with money without the express sanction of his government. So the question was referred to Captain Macgregor—and in the

mean while the perils which beset their position began to thicken around them.* Akbar Khan about this time was wounded by the accidental discharge of a match-lock in the hands of one of his attendants; and it was generally believed throughout the country that Macgregor had bribed the man to assassinate the Sirdar. Had the wound proved mortal, there was at least a possibility of all the prisoners being massacred in revenge.†

April came;‡ and at the end of the first week arrived the glorious tidings of Sale's victory over Akbar Khan on the plain of Jellalabad. Somewhat confusedly

* *March.*—In this month nothing of any consequence occurred, except that up to the 20th instant not a day even passed without one or more shocks of earthquake. About the 18th I received a message from the Nazir in charge of us that Mahomed Shah Khan would release the whole of us for two lakhs of rupees. Made this known to the gentlemen. Had a meeting, at which most of us, or in fact all, agreed, with exception of Major Pottinger—who was averse to our aiding and abetting the enemy with money for our ransom—that Macgregor should be written to, in order to ascertain if government would authorise the payment of the sum. I wrote to Burn, asking him to make known to Macgregor the offer that had been made to me. Received for reply that we might remain satisfied government would not begrudge any sum for our ransom. Nothing further has, however, been done."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.*]

† "About the middle of this month Mahomed Akbar Khan, while mounting his horse, was wounded in the arm by a musket-ball by one of his own servants, who was immediately seized and burnt alive. It is ten thousand pities the man had not taken a surer aim, although, on the report reaching us, we were told that all our lives would have been sacrificed if the Sirdar had been killed. And it is

suspected even now—and all we can say will not convince the people to the contrary—that Macgregor did offer a reward for the assassination of the Sirdar."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS. Records.*]

‡ The 1st of April was not forgotten. It is a curious proof of the irrepressible love of practical joking which clings to our countrymen in all places and in all situations, that the prisoners in Afghanistan, on the 1st of April, turned their misfortunes into food for a joke. Captain Johnson says: "April 1, 1842. Was awakened early by M—— telling me a letter had been received by L—— from Macgregor at Jellalabad, informing him that our ransom had been effected for three and a half lakhs of rupees, and that we were to start in five or six days. Was up in an instant—off to L——; and heard the story confirmed by him. The report spread through the whole fort, among our servants as well as the Europeans, in less than a minute. All was intense delight; when, on its being a little sobered down, to my horror, I was told that the story was all fudge. I was half mad with rage at being made such an April fool of, on a subject which, of all others in our situation, should have been the last for any of our party to have expended his wit upon."—[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.*]

was the story told at first. It was said that the Sirdar had been killed in the action; and that Mahomed Shah Khan had also fallen. It was a day of intense excitement—of painful speculation and suspense. Some thought that Sale would push on to their rescue—others, that the Sirdar, if alive, would condemn them to death in revenge for his discomfiture; or that, if he had fallen, they would be massacred by their guards.* Another day—and another of doubt and anxiety followed. The captives watched, with deep and fearful interest, the deportment of their keepers, who were seen grouping together and conversing in low mysterious whispers. “A frightful stillness appeared to prevail.”† Then came terrible rumours to the effect that the captives were

* “April 7.—Whilst sitting with the Nazir who has charge of us, at about half-past one, a man came in great haste and whispered something in his ear. Without saying a word, he instantly armed himself *cap-à-pie*, and went out of the fort. All was surmise. In two or three hours a report reached us of the total defeat of Mahomed Akbar Khan’s army this morning at Jellalabad. Some said the Sirdar was killed—others, that Mahomed Shah Khan had shared the same fate—whilst a third party gave out that they had both fled with the greatest precipitation towards Caubul. Of the authenticity of the rumoured defeat no one doubted. Now began surmises as to the result of General Sale’s victory to ourselves. Would he push on to our release? Fondly did we hope so! Or would the Sirdar and Mahomed Shah Khan, if alive, avenge themselves in our blood for the ruin of all their hopes at Jellalabad? Or, should they both be killed, might not our guard, who were devotedly attached to Mahomed Shah Khan, butcher us in revenge for his death? We were perfectly defenceless. All our swords and pistols had long been taken away from us. Our suspense was great.”—[Captain Johnson’s Narrative. MS.]

† “April 9.—The whole of this day and yesterday passed in the greatest suspense. Reports reached us to-day that the Sirdar and Mahomed Shah Khan had arrived at the fort of the latter, about two miles distant from us. The rout of the Afghan army appears to have been perfect, and we hear that they have lost all their guns, camp-equipage, and private property. All our guard appear very mysterious—group together—and talk in whispers. The inhabitants of the fort have removed their property and left their homes. Towards the afternoon, several of our guard, with whom we had been in the habit of conversing, and who had always been kind to us, on our asking them what would become of us, would shake their heads and say, ‘You are in the hands of God.’ A frightful stillness appeared to prevail. By degrees we began to hear fearful rumours that we were all to be massacred at sunset. Whether these first originated in the imaginations of some of our party, or in those of the Afghans, I cannot say—but knowing the revengeful temper of those in whose hands we were, nothing appeared to us more probable; and our anxiety and suspense increased as the day wore on. At

to be massacred at sunset. They had been disarmed; they had neither swords nor pistols—no means of resistance were within their reach. They could only submit to be slaughtered like sheep in the shambles. But at sunset their fears were dissipated. Mahomed Shah Khan arrived with a large party of followers. He went among the prisoners with frank cordiality—civilly shook hands with them all—and then sate down and entered into conversation with them. It was necessary, he said, that they should be removed from Budecabad; and that they should commence their march on the following morning. Not a hint fell from him regarding their future destination, and none were inclined to question him. He slept that night in the fort; and the prisoners began to make preparations for the morrow's march. This was no difficult matter. "All my worldly goods," wrote Captain Johnson, "might be stowed away in a towel."

Morning dawned; and Mahomed Shah Khan busied himself in the work of plunder.* There was still some valuable property clinging to the unhappy captives. They who had nothing else had good horses. Lady Macnaghten had jewels and rich shawls. The Ghilzye chief helped himself freely. Then, utterly ignorant of

about sunset a report was brought in that Mahomed Shah Khan was on his way to visit us. Even this was a relief to us, as we knew that what would happen to us must take place shortly. In about ten minutes he arrived with a large party of his followers. On coming up to us, our alarms were at an end as regarded our lives, as he regarded us civilly, and shook hands with the whole of us. We all sate down together. He entered slightly into the defeat of the day before yesterday, and told us that we must be in readiness to leave Budecabad in the morning, without, however,

giving us any hint as to our destination; nor had any of us inclination to ask questions of him. His will is law to us. After sitting for some time he wished us 'Good evening,' and withdrew. He slept in the fort that night, and we were busy making preparations for the morrow's march. These, however, were shortly at an end. All my worldly goods and chattels might be stowed away in a towel or a handkerchief." —[*Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity.* MS.]

* "April 10th.—Up at daylight; had a cup of tea and was ready for

the direction in which they were to proceed, the anxious captives started for their new prison-house. Four camels, with litters, were assigned to the ladies and such of the gentlemen as sickness prevented from mounting the ponies which had been parcelled out amongst them. A guard of fifty Afghans, horse and foot, escorted the little band of prisoners on their mysterious march. The European soldiers were left behind.

They had not proceeded many miles, when two or three horsemen galloped up, and the party of captives were suddenly ordered to halt. Tidings had come, it was said, to the effect that Pollock had been beaten back in the Khybur Pass, with the loss of his guns, his treasure, and half his force. Confident of the truth of this atrocious story, the Afghans of the guard broke out into loud exultation, and the English officers, reluctant as they were to believe it, were overborne at last by the confidence of their escort and compelled to credit the distressing news. False as was the report, it was not ineffective. The prisoners were carried back to Budeeabad. With heavy hearts and sad countenances they returned to their old prison-house, thinking of the new

the march. Took out my saddle to put on my horse; found that some rascal had stolen my stirraps. This was soon rectified by a piece of rope. As I was about saddling my horse, which was a good Hissar-stud animal, Mahomed Shah Khan sent a man to tell me that this was to be his property, and that he would furnish me with some other beast, as none of us were to be permitted to ride horses for fear of making our escape. . . . In the mean time, Mahomed Shah Khan, having heard that Lady Macnaghten was possessed of a great number of magnificent shawls and valuable jewels, which she had been so lucky as to have saved up to this time, went inside and coolly de-

manded her, without sending any previous message, to open her boxes. These were all very soon ransacked; and shawls and jewels to the amount of near two lakhs of rupees were taken possession of by this chief of freebooters—politely telling her ladyship that she might retain one or two shawls and any particular jewel for which she might have more value than another. Many of the little things were also taken possession of by a young whelp—the worthy son of so worthy a sire. Remonstrance was useless. About 9 A.M. we started; but still without the slightest knowledge of where we were going.”—*[Captain Johnson's Narrative of his Captivity. MS.]*

disasters which had overtaken their unhappy country. But their hearts were soon reanimated, and their faces soon brightened up, by the news which greeted them at Budeeabad. Pollock had not been beaten back; but had forced the Khybur Pass, and was marching triumphantly upon Jellalabad. Again, therefore, the captive party were ordered to resume their interrupted march; and on the following morning again they started.

Proceeding for about ten miles, "through a bleak and barren country," they came upon a patch of cultivated ground—which smiled up in the faces of the prisoners like an oasis in the desert.* Crossing the river, they overtook Akbar Khan, sitting in a palanquin, his arm in a sling, looking pale, haggard, and dejected, as one whose fortunes were not on the ascendant. They saluted the Sirdar, passed on, and halted at a short distance from him. The bivouac was a comfortless one. Strictly guarded and insufficiently sheltered, they passed the night in dreary discomfort. Rain fell, and under the scanty tents there was not room for the bedding of the captives. The next day was one of equal misery—there was scarcely any food either for man or beast. On the morning of the 13th a distressing rumour was current among them. It was said that the married families were to be carried off in one direction, and the other captives in another. The scarcity was so great—it was so difficult to subsist them all on one spot—that it was necessary to divide the party. This was not to be submitted to without an effort to obtain the rescision of the obnoxious order. Lawrence went to the Sirdar, and implored him to suffer them all to remain together and to share the same fate. The Sirdar relented; and they all resumed their march together.

* *Captain Johnson's Narrative. MS.*

Their route lay over barren hills and through narrow stony valleys. Every now and then little patches of cultivation sparkled up in the arid waste. There was little or no food to be obtained. A few almonds and raisins, or other dried fruits, sufficed to appease the hunger of the captives, whilst their horses were reduced to skeletons.* The heat was intense. The burning sun scorched the faces of the European travellers, and peeled off the white skin. The journey was a long and painful one, up a steep ascent almost along the whole line of march. The prisoners knew not whither they were going; and it seemed that Akbar Khan did not know where to take them. Some of the captives were suffering severely. The bad roads and the vicissitudes of the climate, for heavy rains followed the parching sun, tried them as in a furnace. General Elphinstone was dying. Lady Macnaghten and Lady Sale were sick. When Akbar Khan was made aware of the latter fact, he took compassion on the English ladies. He was still weak, and suffering from the effects of his wound; but he gave up the palanquin, or litter in which he had been carried, for their use; and rode on horseback to the end of the march.

This was on the 19th of April. On the evening of that day the prisoners reached Tezeen, and were conducted to a fort belonging to a petty Ghilzye chief, in which were all the wives and women of Mahomed Shah Khan. There they remained, poorly accommodated and scantily fed, until the 22nd, when, with the exception of General Elphinstone and two or three other invalids,

* "I fell in on the line of march," writes Captain Johnson, "with some Afghan or other who knew me in former days at Caubul, or who were in public employ under me, who were very liberal in offering to me some-
times a piece of bread, and at others some almonds and raisins; and all, without exception, that I come across are civil and courteous, and seem really to sympathise with our misfortunes."—[*M.S. Narrative.*]

they were all carried off in the direction of the hills, up a gradual ascent of many thousands of feet, to a place called Zanda. There they halted for some weeks, and in the mean while Captain Mackenzie was despatched to Pollock's camp at Jellalabad; and General Elphinstone died.

By his fellow-captives his dissolution had long been anticipated, and was now hardly deplored. Death brought him a merciful release from an accumulation of mortal sufferings. Incessant pain of body and anguish of mind had long been his portion. He felt acutely the humiliating position into which it had pleased Providence to cast him, and neither hoped nor wished to live to face his countrymen in the provinces of Hindostan. They who watched beside the poor old man, during the painful close of his life, bear testimony, in touching language, to the Christian fortitude with which he bore his sufferings, and the Christian charity with which he spoke of others, under all the burdens which pressed upon him.* The hardships to which he had been subjected on the march from one prison-house to another had, perhaps, accelerated the crisis which was hanging over him; but he had long been passing away to his rest, and they, who loved him most, scarcely desired to arrest the progress of the maladies which were so surely destroying him. He left on record a statement of all the circumstances of our disasters—a statement which I have freely quoted in a

* "It is due no less to the memory of the dead than to the large circle of living friends and relatives, who, I feel assured, will mourn his loss, that I should record him to the very last moment of his being. He exhibited a measure of Christian benevolence, patience, and high-souled fortitude, which gained him the affectionate regard and affectionate esteem of all who witnessed his prolonged sufferings and his dying struggles, and who regarded him as the victim less of his own faults than of the errors of others, and the unfathomable designs of a mysterious Providence, by whom the means are always adapted to the end."—[*Eyre.*] See also Pottinger's evidence; quoted, *ante*, pages 179-180, note.

preceding part of my narrative—but even with this statement in his hand, he could not have faced his countrymen without bringing down upon himself a verdict of condemnation. After all that has been written of his deficiencies at Caubul, it may seem a startling inconsistency to say that he was a brave and high-minded gentleman. He was so esteemed before, in an evil hour for his own and his country's reputation, he was ordered to carry his infirmities across the Indus; and in spite of all the humiliating circumstances of our discomfiture at Caubul, posterity may so esteem him. Not upon him, but upon those who are responsible for his appointment to high military command at such a time and in such a place—firstly, upon those who sent him to India; secondly, and chiefly, upon those who sent him to Afghanistan—must we fix the shame of this great miscarriage. When he consented to leave the quiet enjoyment of an honoured old age at home to carry his good fame and his broken constitution to a distant Indian Presidency, he committed a fatal error, for which he made terrible atonement. But there are few who will not pity rather than condemn the man, who found himself suddenly, with all his weakness upon him, in a sea of difficulty which demanded almost superhuman strength to buffet through it. In these pages he has appeared only as the military leader—as one who, in the hour of danger, was tried and found wanting. His fine social qualities cannot be accepted as a set-off to his military deficiencies. It is not to be pleaded in answer to the charge of having sacrificed an army at Caubul, that he was an agreeable gentleman in private life, that he was always ready with an anecdote and told it well, and that it was very hard not to love him. But now that it has been recorded how the soldier became the captive, and how the captive passed away to

his rest, these things may be set down with a kindly hand upon the last page which bears his name; and it may be permitted to us, for a little space, to forget the deficiencies of the soldier whilst we sympathise with the sufferings of the man.*

* General Elphinstone's remains were sent by Akbar Khan, for interment, to Jellalabad. The General's faithful servant, Moore, accompanied the body. "I have the honour to inform you," wrote Pottinger to Pollock, on the 26th of April, "that Mahomed Akbar Khan yesterday despatched to you the body of the late Major-General Elphinstone. It was, however, intercepted by a party of the Ghilzyes, under the supposition that the Prince in Caubul had sent it, the party made prisoners, and the European servant, who had been allowed to accompany it, wounded. The savages, however, on hearing that Mahomed Akbar Khan had sent it, deputed one of their number to learn the truth. The Sirdar is much grieved at the accident, and now sends a party, with private Moore, the General's servant, to replace the corpse and forward it on. The Sirdar at present is unable to release the two servants from the hostility of the intermediate clans; but he promises to do so as soon as a person may arrive sufficiently powerful to protect them."—[*Major Pottinger to General Pollock: Castle of Afzool Khan, Tezeen, April 26, 1842. MS. Records.*] The General's remains subsequently reached Jellalabad, and were interred with military honours.

CHAPTER V.

[December: 1841—June: 1842.]

Stoddart and Conolly—Intelligence of the Caubul Outbreak—Arrest of the English Officers—Their sufferings in Prison—Conolly's Letters and Journals—Death of the Prisoners.

THERE is a painful episode in this epic of the Afghan war, which perhaps can be introduced in no place more fitly than in this. Whilst the prisoners, who surrendered themselves on the march between Caubul and Jellalabad, were suffering such hardships only as were inseparable from their position in a rude and inhospitable country, and the hostages at Caubul were under the protection of a benevolent and high-minded Afghan nobleman, two enlightened and chivalrous British officers were enduring unparalleled sufferings in the dungeons of an Oosbeg tyrant, far beyond the snowy mountains of the Hindoo-Koosh. Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly were being devoured by vermin in a cheerless prison in the city of Bokhara.

It was in the middle of the month of December, 1841, that intelligence reached Bokhara to the effect that all Caubul and the surrounding country had risen against Shah Soojah and his Feringhee allies, that Sir Alex-

ander Burnes had been killed, and the British troops beaten in battle. A few days before, an answer had been received to a letter addressed by the Ameer to the Queen of England. The answer was written by the Foreign Secretary, and it referred the King to the Government of India. This indignity—for so he regarded it—was still rankling in his mind, when tidings of the Caubul outbreak reached Bokhara. The Ameer now sent for the English officers—asked them many questions—said that he would release Colonel Stoddart but detain Captain Conolly; and finally, after pondering the matter for a few days, condemned them both to imprisonment in the house of the Topshee-Bashee, or chief artilleryman of Bokhara.*

Here their condition became every day more deplorable. They were not allowed a change of raiment, and the clothes rotted on their backs. Nauseous vermin preyed upon their bodies, and they tore the irritated flesh with their nails. They were not denied either a sufficiency of food or firing; but water leaked through the roof of the miserable room in which they were confined. Cold and fever racked them grievously; but they comforted one another with Christian consolation, and they prayed together to the Christian's God.

In this wretched prison-house, though strictly guarded,

* "The Ameer was very much enraged at finding that the Queen had not answered his letter; but had referred Colonel Stoddart to the Indian Government, for all matters connected with Bokhara. About five days after this, intelligence was received that Sir Alexander Burnes had been murdered at Caubul. On the receipt of this intelligence a servant of the Ameer was sent to call the two gentlemen to his presence. The Ameer asked Colonel Stoddart which road he could now take, even

supposing he (the Ameer) was willing to release him. The Colonel said he could go either by Russia or Persia. The Ameer said he would release him in seven or eight days, and keep Captain Conolly. A few days afterwards the English gentlemen were sent for to the palace and confined."—[*Statement of Shah Mahomed, Populzye, one of Captain Conolly's attendants. MS. Records.*] This part of the statement is entirely confirmed by that of Saleh Mahomed, Akhondzadeh, as taken by Colonel Sheil.

they were not so closely watched that Conolly could not contrive to spend many an hour chronicling, in small characters upon Russian paper, all the incidents of captive life, and drawing up, for the information of his government, elaborate memoranda on the politics of Central Asia. In spite of all difficulties of transmission, many of these notes and memoranda found their way from Bokhara to Caubul; and, surviving all the chances of destruction to which the convulsed state of Afghanistan necessarily exposed them, were conveyed in safety to the British camp, and are now lying before me.* In no way could the sufferings which the Bokhara captives endured be set forth so truthfully as in extracts from such of Conolly's letters and journals as have fortunately been preserved.

The English officers must have been thrown into prison about the 17th of December. At the end of that month, or on the first day of the new year, Allahdad Khan, the Caubul envoy, was brought in to share their captivity.† "The Topshee-Bashee, on leaving Allahdad Khan with us," wrote Conolly in his journal, "made over to me a superfluous *posteen*‡ belonging to my friend, which enabled me to throw aside the stinking garment given by the Meer []§; this and his allowing Allahdad Khan to keep the rest of his clothes, looked as if the Ameer had somewhat relented, as the Topshee-Bashee would not have dared to show us so much kindness without leave." But these hopes were

* Some of these papers, written closely on every side, had been cut into three pieces, and apparently sent by as many messengers.

† Allahdad Khan, the Afghan envoy, who accompanied Captain Conolly, had been permitted to take his departure from Bokhara, but was afterwards brought back and confined. He remained for some days

in the same apartment with Stoddart and Conolly, but was subsequently removed to other quarters. The servants of the latter officer were also thrown into prison—some of them into the well, or log-house, in which Stoddart had been incarcerated.

‡ An Afghan over-coat.

§ Obscure in MS.

delusive. The Ameer had not relented. Day after day passed, and their sufferings increased.

All through the month of January little change took place in the condition of the captives. On the last day of the month, wrote Conolly, "a Mehrum came to desire that we would minutely describe the city and castle of Caubul, and also give an account of Heraut. Allahdad Khan drew a plan of the first place; Stoddart was named as the one who best knew the second; but the Mehrum did not take his account of it. We next day learnt that he had been sent to the Akhondzadeh,* who had drawn a large plan of his native city." As February wore on, other encouraging signs of the Ameer's desire to treat the prisoners with greater kindness presented themselves. On the 9th of February another gleam of hope burst in upon them. The incident is thus touchingly described in Conolly's journal:

February 9 [1842].—Moolla Nasir came to ask if we had seen the Peacock throne of India. As every lettered Asiatic should know that Nadir Shah carried that throne away to Persia, and Moolla Nasir's manner was pointedly kind, we judged that the question he had been sent to ask was a pretence, and that the Ameer desired an opening for a return to proper treatment of us. Stoddart, therefore, gave him this, by speaking of his position here as British agent, and expressing regret that he had not been able to relieve the Huzrut's mind from the doubts which he seemed to entertain of the English Government's friendship. We showed the sad state of our clothes (Stoddart had been obliged to put aside his shirt in consequence of the roof's having leaked over him the night before), and expressed hope that the Ameer would soon improve our condition; but we both spoke cheerfully, that the King might not think we entertained resentment for his treatment of us.†

* Saleh Mahomed, the Akhondzadeh, made a similar statement to Colonel Sheil. I see no reason to doubt the statements of this man, which are confirmed in many particulars by the accounts of other witnesses.

† Arthur Conolly's *MS. Journal*.

A Russian Mission was then at Bokhara, under the charge of Colonel Bontenoff, who seems to have been in higher favour than the English gentlemen; and to have greatly pitied their condition.* On the 15th of February the prisoners despatched a letter to them by the hands of one of their dependents, known as Long Joseph, whose exploits are thus recorded:

February 15.—This day Long Joseph gallantly darted into our room, and carried off a note which we had written for Colonel Bontenoff, to inform him of our situation.

February 16.—Long Joseph having won a servant of the Topshee-Bashce's, conveyed to us a note from the gaoler, and sent it to him; Stoddart writing to government through Sir J. McNeill.

All the symptoms of a favorable change in the state of the Ameer's feelings proved delusive. Day after day passed, and the prisoners still remained in the same unhappy condition; at last, at the end of February, Conolly wrote:

We hoped from Moolla Nasir's visit, and that of the page, who brought my thermometer, that the Ameer was relenting, but nothing has since occurred to favour this idea; on the contrary, the chief would appear to find pleasure in his servant's accounts of our discomfort, which may be imagined from the fact that we have now been seventy-one days and nights without means of changing or washing our lincn, which is hanging in filthy tatters from our persons. The Topshee-Bashce, who looks in upon us every seven or eight days, replies to our entreaties for an improvement in this respect, that our state must be well known to the Huzrut, whose mind retains thought of the greatest and least matters, and that nothing can be said to his Majesty about us till he opens the subject. The Topshee-Bashce has, I believe, been as kind to us as he has dared to be. We have had quite enough firing and food throughout the cold season we have passed in his house,

* Colonel Stoddart had inter- changed visits with them before Conolly's arrival. Shah Mahomed says: "There was an ambassador at this time from the Russian Government who came twice to see the English gentlemen, who also visited him."—*[MS. Records.]*

and continue, thank God! in good health. We sometimes think, from the Ameer's keeping back Said's and the Akhondzadeh's packets, that he must have received the Governor-General's communication, and that he is acting big in irritation at not having been answered from the English throne; but it is impossible to form certain conclusions from his conduct, for it is very often influenced by caprice, which is not very far from madness. We hope that all is well in Afghanistan, and that, soon as the Hindoo-Koosh roads become open, the Ameer will receive some communication which will induce him to properly treat or dismiss us. We beg that government will convey its sentiments to the Ameer in Persian, as he will not take our word for what is written in English any longer than it suits him, and also that no allusion may be made to the above details, for if the King knew that we were able to send intelligence he might treat us worse, and perhaps kill everybody about us. The Russians propose to go about No-roz. We kept Colonel Bontenoff informed of our proceedings up to the date of our seizure, and if he should reach Europe ere our release he may be able to enlarge this abstract, which is necessarily very imperfect.

In the second week of March, Conolly's sufferings broke out openly in the shape of cold and fever. Enfeebled and irritated by disease, he then began to despond. It seemed to him that he was in the toils of death; and in a high state of excitement, after many sleepless nights, he wrote to his brother, John Conolly, then also a prisoner in the hands of a Mussulman enemy, the following touching letter:

From our Prison in the Bokhara Citadel,
11th March, 1842.

MY DEAR JOHN,

This will probably be my last note hence, so I dedicate it to you, who now, alas! stand next to me. We both dedicate everything we feel warmest to William, whom may God bless in all belonging to him, for his long and untiring brotherly affection to us all! Send my best love to Henry and to all our dear sisters.

This is the eighty-third day that we have been denied the means of getting a change of linen from the rags and vermin

that cover us; and yesterday, when we begged for an amendment in this respect, the Topshee-Bashee, who had before come occasionally as our host to speak encouragingly, set his face like a flint to our request, showing that he was merely a vane to the withering wind of his heartless master, and could not help us thus, so that we need not ask him to do so. This, at first, astonished and defeated us; we had viewed the Ameer's conduct as perhaps dictated by mad caprice; but now, looking back upon the whole, we saw instead that it had been just the deliberate malice of a demon, questioning and raising our hopes, and ascertaining our condition, only to see how our hearts were going on in the process of breaking. I did not think to shed one warm tear among such cold-blooded men, but yesterday evening, as I looked upon Stoddart's half-naked and nail-lacerated body, conceiving that I was the special object of the king's hatred because of my having come to him after visiting Khiva and Kokund, and told him that the British Government was too great to stir up secret enmity against any of its enemies, I wept on entreating one of our keepers, the gunner's brother, to have conveyed to the chief my humble request that he would direct his anger upon me, and not further destroy by it my poor brother Stoddart, who had suffered so much and so meekly here for three years. My earnest words were answered by a "Don't cry and distress yourself;" he also could do nothing. So we turned and kissed each other, and prayed together, and then said, in the words of the Kokunders, "*My-bish!*"* Let him do as he likes! he is a demon, but God is stronger than the devil himself, and can certainly release us from the hands of this fiend, whose heart he has perhaps hardened to work out great ends by it; and we have risen again from bed with hearts comforted, as if an angel had spoken to them, resolved, please God, to wear our English honesty and dignity to the last, within all the filth and misery that this monster may try to degrade us with.

We hope that, though the Ameer should now dismiss us with gold clothing, the British and Afghan Governments will treat him as an enemy; and this out of no feeling of revenge. He treacherously caused Stoddart to invite me here on his own Imayut-Nameh; and after Stoddart had given him a translation of a letter from Lord Palmerston, containing nothing but friendly

* Obscure in *MS.*

assurances, which he could have verified, with our entire consent, at the Russian embassy, he pent us both up here, because we would not pay him as a kidnapper for our release, to die by slow rot, if it should appear that he might venture at last to put us altogether out of the way. We hope and pray that God may forgive him his sins in the next world; but we also trust that some human power will soon put him down from his oppressive throne at this capital, whence emanates the law by which the Khivans harry and desolate the roads and homes of the Persians. He wishes every soul to crouch before him, and not breathe God's air freely without his leave, nor dare to be happy or at ease. For instance (and we are at the fountain-head of police report), a poor wretch, confined without food for three days and nights in the Bug House, an infernal hole used for severe imprisonment, said incautiously, on being taken out, that he was alive and well. "He is, is he?" said the Ameer, on the report; "then put him in for three days and nights more." Again, the other night fifty-six grooms assembled at a house outside the city, to make merry on pilau and tea, with money liberally given by one of the Oosbeg men, Ralman Kool Tohsaba, to his head-groom, who acted as master of the feast: they were convicted of having got together, so all that the police-master could seize received seventy-five blows each on the back with a heavy thorn-stick; and because one man uncomplainingly bore his punishment, which was inflicted on all before the King, he had him hoisted for seventy-five more, saying, "He must have been struck softly." "But what was the crime in this innocent meeting of poor grooms?" we asked our gaolers. "Who knows?—he is a king, and gave the order." The master of the entertainment stood with his dagger against some thirty policemen, till he was felled by a stone thrown at his head, to let all who could escape; for this heavier offence he was condemned to be thrown from a part of the citadel wall, which gives a culprit a chance of escape with only the fracture of a limb, because it has a slope: he threatened to pull down with him any who should approach the brink to throw him off, and, leaping boldly down, came to the ground with whole bones, and lives, let us hope, for many a happy meeting yet with his friends in this now oppressed city. This is how the Ameer would treat such ambassadors as he dares insult, who do not bend reverently enough before him; but the days for such despotism are passing

quick, and he must himself be made to go down before the strong spirit of Western civilisation. Stoddart has asked me to put on paper my notions as to the measures that should now be adopted for the settlement and independent happiness of the Central Asian states;—here they are, briefly and freely; those of a man born and bred, thank God! in Protestant England, who has seen Russia, Persia, and Afghanistan, and all the three Oosbeg States.

Turn out the horrible Wuzeer Yar Mahomed Khan, who has sold 12,000 men, women, and children, since he obliged the Persians to retire from Herat, and buy out Kamran's family from that principality. Kamran himself forfeited all his kingly right here by his letter to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva, which the latter chief gave me in return for my frank communication to him, and which I sent to Sir William Macnaghten. Thus will be gained the only point from which the Afghan nation can lend its weight to the preservation of peace and the advancement of civilisation in Toorkistan, protect its weakest subjects from being stolen or sold away, and properly guard its own and India's frontier. Next, let Pottinger come in attendance upon Shah Soojah's heir-apparent, Shah-zadah Timour, with a few thousand select Afghan horsemen of both the tribes, half Dourance and half Ghilzyc, to blow down the gate of the citadel, which unjustly imprisoned us, against the rights of all nations, except those the Oosbegs profess. The Amceer scornfully says that the Afghans and English are one people; let him feel that they really are so in a good cause. I really do believe that if Shah-zadah Timour were to return, after such a proceeding, to assume the actual exercise of government at his father's capital, taking back with him all real Afghans now enslaved in Toorkistan, whose orthodoxy, according to the Soonees, is unquestionable, and who might easily be collected for a friendly offering, the Afghans would so thoroughly like him and understand us, that every English and Indian soldier might be withdrawn to Hindostan.

Let the Shah-i-Shah of Persia at the same time write these few words to the Court of the faithful at Bokhara, sending copies of his letter by friendly and high ambassadors to Khiva and Kokund: "I want all my enslaved subjects who are not willing to remain in Bokhara, and I am now coming, in reliance upon the only God of justice, to free them, and to destroy the law of THE Mooftched,

by which people who pray towards the same Kebla are sold as cattle." Let Mahomed Shah lithograph this, and send a copy to be stuck up at every mosque where his authority or influence can reach, in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tartary. This writing will tell the Ameer that his kingdom has been weighed and found wanting; it will do much to soften and liberalise Mahomedan feeling wherever it is read; and if the Persian nation are informed that it comes to them recommended by English sympathy, they will dismiss all irritation of mind that was caused by our checking their military career at Herat.

I feel confident that this great and most necessary measure of Persian 'emancipation' may be effected at once without shedding one drop of blood. I never uttered a word of hostility against the Ameer, either at Khiva or Kokund; but now I am authorised to show how I thought the rulers of these states, who both hate him, may be made to end or lessen their own foolish enmity, by his removing from between them. Let the Shah of Persia send a firman to Syud Mahomed Zahed, Kurruck Kojeh at Kokund, whom he knows, saying—"Tell the Khan Huzrut, of Kokund, who I am happy to find does not deal in my people, that I am about to liberate all those oppressed men and women who are unwillingly detained as slaves in Bokhara. I don't want that country; and if you will send Lushker Begglerbiggee, or Mahomed Shereff Atalik, with the Kokund army about the same time to Samarcand, my prime minister shall make it over to him by treaty, as the capital of Mawarulneh. I shall give up Merve to the Khan Huzrut of Khiva to be made the capital of Kharasm, on condition of his doing all he can to restore and content my unfortunate people, whom his tribes have carried off during my wars in other directions."

The best Oosbeg troops are mere rubbish as opponents to Persian regulars and cannon, and they all know it. Allah Kouli Khan is the best and most sensible man in his country, and he will remain quiet while Mahomed Shah comes against Bokhara, if Shakespear can be empowered to tell him that this is a reform which must be effected, and which Persia is determined now to effect, with the commerce of England and Russia. Shakespear can mediate between the Khan Huzrut and Mohamed Shah for the gentle emancipation of those who may wish to return home in the next four or five years, or to settle in the fine waste land of Merve;

and perhaps Mahomed Shah may give to Allah Kouli Khan the very large colony of [],* now settled here, who really yet long for the home of their fathers; this, and my securing to the Kokan frontier up the Oxus to Balkh, perhaps leaving the khan of it his easy tributary, would make him agree to all that the Afghans need for the formation of their frontier from Persian Khorassan to the Oxus.

England and Russia may then agree about immutable frontiers for Persia, Afghanistan, Mawarulneh, and Kharasm, in the spirit which becomes two of the first European nations in the year 1842 of Jesus Christ, the God incarnate of all peace and wisdom. May this pure and peaceable religion be soon extended all over the world!

ARTHUR CONOLLY.

March 12th.

I beg that fifty tillas may be given to Jooma Bai, the servant who will convey this to Long Joseph. (Let the utmost caution be used always in mentioning their names while this Amcer lives or reigns.) As for Long Joseph, I don't know what reward to propose for him. He has risked his life for us in the most gallant manner, as few men would, except for a brother, and he is a noble fellow. I feel sure that government will forgive me for not being able to make an account of my stewardship during my Toorkish mission, and that it will use every exertion to get free and to reward all who have suffered with me, but remained alive.

Allahdad Khan had some 400 tillas in cash when he was brought back, besides his baggage and horses. Akhondzadeh Saleh Mohamed has served too well to make it necessary for me to recommend him. I trust that God has preserved his life. Stoddart and I will comfort each other in every way till we die, when may our brotherhood be renewed in heaven through Jesus Christ our Saviour! Send this assurance to all our friends, and do you, my dear John, stand in this faith. It is the only thing that can enable a man to bear up against the trials of this life, and lead him to the noblest state of existence in the next. Farewell—farewell! I shall send this to be forwarded, if news reaches Stoddart's faithful man Ibraheem of our death, through Jooma Bai and Long Joseph.†

* Obscure in MS.

† MS. Correspondence of A. Conolly.

On the 22nd of March, Conolly again wrote, full of affectionate solicitude for the sufferings of his friends, but little mindful of his own:

After sending a page with my thermometer on the 15th ult. (February), to ask how much cold it indicated, as detailed in my last letter, the Ameer took no notice of us till the 13th of this month, when he sent the gold chronometer which I had given him, to show that its chain was broken, and to ask if we could repair it; a pretence, the Topshee-Bashee said, to ascertain what state we were in. We had both become ill, a few days before, from a sudden cold change of weather, and the discomfort of filthy clothing; and I, who had given in most to the sickness, owing to anxiety of mind regarding the many persons whom I had been the means of bringing into the Ameer's tyrannous hands, was lying weak in bed with fever when the last page came. The Topshee-Bashee, who for some time spoke encouragingly about changing our clothes, had by this time caused us plainly to understand that he neither dared himself to amend our position in this respect, nor even to represent it to the Ameer. He now tried to save us by telling the page that I had been confined to my bed eight days, and by remarking upon the wretched state of our apparel after eighty-five days and nights' wear. I showed the Mehrum that Stoddart had been obliged to cast away all his under-clothing, and was suffering much from cold on the chest. I experienced hope that the Ameer would take some pity upon us, and especially upon such of my late travelling companions and people as might be suffering under his displeasure. The page said that he would make a representation if the Huzrut questioned him; and he afterwards told the Topshee-Bashee that, on the Ameer's doing so, he had stated that the King's last-come slave, Kan-Ali (Conolly), had been very ill for eight or nine days; to which the Huzrut had replied, "May he not die (or, I suppose, he won't die) for the three or four days that remain till his going." We thought from this that the Ameer proposed to send us away with the Russians, who were said to be preparing to depart after the *No-roz*. Nothing else has since transpired regarding ourselves; but through the indefatigable Long Joseph we have learnt the following items of intelligence about our friends.*

* The men formerly in Dr. Gerard's service, enslaved fifteen years ago, whom I had ransomed at Khiva by order of Government.

On the 13th inst., Ibraheem wrote: "With regard to Caubul be quite at ease; 30,000 people (rebels?) have been slaughtered there." Allahdad Khan, the Akhonzadah, Eusoff Khan (Augustin), the Jemadar, Meer Akhor, with Bolund Khan, Kurreen Khan, and Gool Mahomed, had been released; for which we sincerely thanked God. Their sufferings, poor fellows, in that horrible dungeon, must have been great. . . .

On the 23rd, we were made further happy by the verbal intelligence of Long Joseph that Allahdad Khan and the rest of our people had been released.

On the 24th, he again recorded that a ray of hope had broken into his dreary dungeon:

24th.—This forenoon, the Topshee-Bashee coming to see us, said, with a cheerful manner, "‘Sewonchce’—Reward me for glad tidings. I represented your great want of clothes, and proposed to buy shirts and trousers for you from the bazaar, but the Huzrut said, ‘They don’t wear bazaar clothes; in three or four days I’ll give them dresses of honour and dismiss them.’ And the Huzrut asked Meerza Juneid which road would be the best one for you to travel by, saying, ‘They cannot now go in that direction’ (apparently meaning Caubul). Meerza Juneid replied, that the route by Persia would now be the best. After which the Ameer spoke graciously about you. He said that Kan-Ali was a well-informed person, that the Meerza represented that he had conversed very little with Kan-Ali, but that Stoddart, of whom he had seen much, was a man instructed upon all matters." We doubted the Topshee-Bashee’s having dared to make a representation of himself regarding us. And the old guardian mentioned afterwards that Meerza Juneid had come to his brother’s office. Probably desiring to know whether I was better or worse in health since the 13th, the Ameer sent Meerza Juneid, in his capacity of physician, to make inquiries in this matter.

A few days afterwards, remembering how he had written, under the excitement, almost the delirium of fever, a desponding letter to John Conolly, he wrote more cheerfully to his brother, begging him, if the letter reached its destination, not to be dispirited by

it, for that both he and Stoddart were now in good health:

Bokhara Citadel, 28th March, 1842.

MY DEAR JOHN,

We have been comforted by intelligence that the Ameer has released Allahdad Khan and all my people from the gaol into which he so unjustly and cruelly confined them. . . . The Ameer has lately been talking, we hear, of sending us away, and though we do not set much store by his words, we think it possible he may give us to the Russian Mission, who are about to depart. . . . I wrote you a longish letter on the 11th of this month, when I was in a high state of excitement, from fever and several nights of sleepless anxiety. The burden of it was an entreaty to the last effect regarding my poor people, and a hope that the British Government would seize the opportunity which the Ameer's faithlessness had given them to come forward with Persia to put him down, and give his country to Kharasm and Kokund, on condition of the entire suppression of the Persian and Afghan slave trade in Toorkistan. If that paper (which I shall endeavour to recover) should reach you, compress its words into this purport and destroy it, reserving my last good wishes for the friends to whom I addressed them, thinking that I might not live much longer. I am now, thank God, almost well in health again, and the news regarding our people has set my mind at rest. Stoddart, also, who was suffering awhile from severe cold, is, I rejoice to say, convalescent. We are both in a very uncomfortable state, as you may imagine, having been ninety-nine days and nights without a change of clothes; but we are together. Stoddart is such a friend as a man would desire to have in adversity, and our searchers having missed the little Prayer-book which George Macgregor gave us, (tell him) we are able to read and pray, as well as to converse together. God bless you, my dear John. Send my love to everybody, and believe me,

Yours, ever most affectionately,

ARTHUR CONOLLY.*

To J. B. Conolly, Esq., Caubul.

* *MS. Correspondence.* — Arthur Conolly was painfully anxious to remove from the minds of his friends the impression which might have been produced upon them by his letter of the 11th of March. Again he wrote in his journal-letter: "I take this opportunity of explaining that my

The passages omitted from this letter relate almost entirely to the services and the pay of Conolly's attendants. There is nothing more remarkable in his letters and journals, written at this time, than his tender regard for others, and his forgetfulness of self. Not only did he grieve for the sufferings of his friend, and endeavour, by putting him forward as the real representative of the British Government, to obtain Stoddart's release, or at least a mitigation of the severity of his confinement, but he exhibited the tenderest solicitude for the welfare of all the servants who had accompanied him to Bokhara, and in the midst of his own affliction, even on the bed of sickness and in the near prospect of death, thought of nothing more earnestly than the future welfare of his poor dependents.* On the 5th of April he wrote in his journal:

April 5.—When I came here, Stoddart did his utmost to put me forward; but now, as long as the Ameer detains him, I shall

letter of the 11th of March was written when I was very ill with fever. Thinking that he might forcibly be sent away from me on the departure of the Russians (as they brought a request for his dismissal), or that we might be otherwise separated, Stoddart had begged me to give him a memorandum of my opinions regarding the policy to be pursued towards these states; and I wrote off a hasty summary of these notions, which were running in my head, with many things that I was anxious to say about my unfortunate servants, and to my friends, when under excitement, which must have made my expressions very wild and incoherent. I hoped that the paper containing them remained in the hands of Long Joseph; but he, misunderstanding our instructions, instead of keeping it, gave it to Eusofee-i-Roomee (Augustin), who, apparently, went off at once with it to Caubul.

When I got better I drew up for Stoddart the memorandum which he had asked for, and which he now decides on forwarding. It is written in a more calm and less indignant tone than the letter aforesaid, but allowance must be made for the brevity and freedom of the propositions, for we were so liable to be interrupted and discovered, that I could only pen my opinions by snatches, and paper is a scarce article with us."—[*Arthur Conolly's MS. Journal.*]

* General Pollock exerted himself to obtain an adjustment of the claims of Captain Conolly's servants; and he succeeded. The letter which was written in reply to Pollock's application shows in what light Lord Ellenborough regarded Conolly's mission: "With reference," wrote the Chief Secretary, "to your letter of the 23rd ultimo, on the subject of the remuneration applied for, on behalf of the servants attached to the mission of

refer to him as the accredited British agent, every communication on business that the Ameer may make to me, whether we should be together or separated. He well knows all the people here, and the dignity of our government is safe in his hands.

We have heard that the Russians are about to depart, and that they are to take their enslaved people with them; but we cannot get at the truth of the statement. Report also says that the Ameer will march with his army seven or eight days hence. There is no doubt that he is preparing for an early move; but though Takkind and Kokund are named as his points of attack, it is not certain that he will go eastward. This is the 107th day of our confinement, without change of clothes; but the weather having become warmer, we can do without the garments that most harboured the vermin that we found so distressing, and we are both now, thank God! quite well. We trust that our friends will be informed of our well-being. We have desired all our servants, except Ibraheem (who remains behind to keep up correspondence), to return to their homes as soon as their strength enables them to travel, begging them to make their way anyhow, and to rest assured that everything due will be made up to them on their reaching Caubul. . . . Allahdad Khan behaved very firmly in refusing to allow that he was the servant of a Feringhee servant, as the Ameer wished him to do, and did justice both to the dignity of his royal master and to the policy of the British Government in Afghanistan. I beg that his conduct may be

Lieutenant A. Conolly to Kokund, I am directed to inform you that the Governor-General has no knowledge of Lieutenant A. Conolly's mission to Kokund having been authorised. On the contrary, his Lordship was informed, by the late President of the Board of Control, that Lieutenant A. Conolly was expressly instructed by him not to go to Kokund; and, in all probability, he owes all his misfortunes to his direct transgression of that instruction. The servants entertained by him, however, are not responsible for the indiscretion of their master. They were in the service of an officer apparently employed on a public mission by his government, and the Governor-General is prepared

to consider their position favorably. His Lordship, therefore, authorises the disbursement of the sums stated in the papers attached to your letter, under reply to be due to these several persons; but the sums so paid on account of wages accruing to these several persons, after they left Khiva (after deducting therefrom the amount of wages which would have become due during a direct march to Caubul) will be made a charge against Lieutenant A. Conolly, who will be required to refund the amount, as well as all sums which may have been drawn on account of such an unauthorised extension of his mission."—[*Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: Simlah, Nov. 8, 1842. MS. Records.*]

mentioned to Shah Soojah, and I trust that all his losses will be made up to him; but if the preparation of the account is left to him, he will make it a very large one, and part of the settlement may perhaps be deferred till it is decided whether or no the Ameer is to be called upon for repayment.

When our last packet was despatched we deemed it not impossible, from the Ameer's expressions, which had been reported to us, that his Majesty designed to send us away with the Russian Mission. Our keepers rather inclined to the idea that Huzrut would dismiss us about the same time by the route of Persia; and the Topshee-Bashee's old brother talked seriously about performing a pilgrimage to the holy city of Meshid in our company.

These hopes were most delusive. As time advanced, the prospects of restoration to liberty became more and more remote. About the middle of the month of April the Russian Mission took its departure; and the Ameer set out from Bokhara at the head of a grand military expedition against the state of Kokund. On the 13th of April, Conolly wrote in his journal:

April 13.—We heard that the Russians had been dismissed with presents of honour, that the Khodiyar Beg Karawool Beggee, ranking as captain or commander of 100, had been attached to Colonel Boutenoff as the Ameer's envoy to St. Petersburg, and that the Huzrut had promised to promote him to the grade of Tok-Suba, commander of 1000, privileged to bear a cow-tail banner, on his return after the performance of good service. The Ameer's own arrangements were said to be completed, and the direction of it certainly to the eastward. An envoy from Kokund, who arrived two days ago, was not received, but was told to go about his own business wherever he listed. Our informant mentioned at the same time that the last envoy from Khiva had been dismissed a fortnight before with extraordinary honour, all his servants getting dresses. We now also learned that the heir of the Koondooz chief had sent an envoy to the Ameer, who had ordered one of his officers, a Khojeh, styled Salam Aghassi, to accompany that agent to Koondooz on his return. It was thought, we were told, that the Khojeh of

Balkh would endeavour to take Koondooz on Meer Morad's death, and the heir may, in this apprehension, have been alert to put himself under the Ameer's protection. This morning the Ameer showed the Topshee-Bashee an especial mark of favour by sending him a loaf of refined sugar from the palace; towards evening his Majesty rode four miles to a place of pilgrimage, and on his return at night had the Topshee-Bashee up to give him some orders.

The narrative then proceeds:

Early next morning (the 14th) the Ameer marched out to the sound of his palace kettle-drums and trumpets, leaving us in the filthy clothes which we had worn for 115 days and nights. We said to the Gunner's old brother, when he mentioned the Ameer's having departed, "Then the Meshid caravan apparently stands fast." "No," was his reply; "please God it will go soon. I asked the Topshee-Bashee last night if nothing had been settled about you, and he replied, 'When the Russians get out a march or so, the Dustan Kanchee will make a petition about them, and they will be dismissed.'" The old man also remarked, probably from what he had heard his brother say, that the Ameer had expressed himself to the effect that he knew the Russian Elchee was led to get us in order to make a boast of having procured our release, which made it seem as though Colonel Boutenoff had been endeavouring to obtain our dismissal. Our old keeper persisted for some days in assuring us of his belief that our immediate dismissal was designed, and on the 18th said that he was going down into the city to seek out my Dewan Beggee, Eusoff Khan (Augustin), to set his mind at ease about us; he returned, saying that he had been referred from place to place without finding Eusoff Khan, or any of our people, but that one Meer Hyder and another shop-keeper of his acquaintance had assured him that they were all in the town, and that four or five of them were in the habit of coming occasionally at night to a certain quarter to hear books read. We had thought the Gunners might have received orders to collect some of our people in order to our respectable dismissal; but knowing that all our men, except Ibraheem, had left Bokhara, we concluded that the Topshee-Bashee had made use of his old brother to deceive us, in order to keep us hopeful and quiet for

another period, as he said nothing about changing our clothes, and kept himself quite aloof from us, which he would hardly have done had he believed what he reported in the Ameer's name.

Just before the Ameer's departure, we heard that a British Elchee had arrived at Merve on his way hither. We could get no further accounts of the said Elchee, but judged that it might be Shakespear on his way to Khiva [MS. defaced]
 From the 4th to the 7th of May the palace drums and trumpets were continually sounding for intelligence that Kokund had been taken after a faint endeavour at resistance under the famed Kokund general, Guda Bai; that the latter had been taken prisoner, and that the rebellious town had been given up to plunder, &c.

Then follows much of Bokhara politics, the manuscript being greatly defaced—and after this, some passages of personal narrative, the chronicle of which extends up to the 24th of May—the latest date under which I have been able to discover anything in the hand-writing of Arthur Conolly:

We had expressed to our old guardian a wish to get some money from Meshed, with which to reward him for his kindness, (and to get) him privately to buy (us) a few necessaries in the event of our further detention, and, liking the idea, he, on the 19th instant (May), brought secretly to see us his son-in-law Budub, employed as a caravan-bashee between Bokhara and the Holy City, who agreed to act as agent in the business after another week. Enquiring the news from Budub, we heard that Kamran was said to be confined in Herat by Yar Mahomed Khan—that the English remained as before at Candahar and Caubul—and that four Elchees, English, Russian, Persian, and Turkish, had gone together to Khiva, each displaying his national flag, and told the Khan Huzrut that he had the choice of quietly giving up plundering and slave-dealing, or of meeting the Shah of Persia, who had assembled a large army for the redress of his people.

* * * * *

Our old friend now informed us, on the authority of his Afghan

acquaintance, Meer Hyder, that all our people had left Bokhara on hearing that they had been inquired about. . . . Possibly the Ameer really did mean to send us away at the time of his marching, but deferred to do so on hearing that we had no servants left here, or from one of his incalculable caprices. I had noted, in a detailed report of our proceedings after leaving Kokund, which when we were seized I was waiting the Ameer's permission to despatch by a courier to Caubul, an expression which the Naib heard his Majesty had uttered in his camp after my arrival, to the effect that he would give the English a few rubs more, and then be friends with them again. Though we were not sure that the Ameer had so spoken, the plan seems one likely to be entertained by an ignorant and weak man, anxious to give an imposing impression of his greatness and confidence; and to it I partly attributed the ungraciousness of my public reception in camp, though I was the Naib's honoured guest; the failure of the Huzrut to recover the horses and the property of my servants which had been plundered at his outposts, when bringing letters to him, and the hauteur with which, at the first joint reception of Stoddart and myself here, he caused it to be signified to us that as in old times there had been friendship between the Mussulmans and infidels, there existed no objection to the establishment of friendly relations between the states of Bokhara and England; but that the Huzrut desired to know whether we (the English) had been travellers over all Toorkistan to spy the land with a view to take it, as we had taken Caubul, or for other purposes; and wished all our designs to be unveiled, in order that if they were friendly they might become apparent, and that if hostile, they might still be known. The Government of India, knowing what communications it has sent to Bokhara, will be able to judge the Ameer's conduct better than we are.

On the 19th (May) the Topshec-Bashee paid us a visit of a few moments, after keeping away for two months. He mentioned that a man with a name like Noor Mohumnud had come three or four days before from Persia, bringing a load of things for Stoddart, of which the Dustan Kanchee had forwarded a list to the Ameer—probably the articles which should have accompanied Lord Palmerston's letter. The Huzrut, the Topshec-Bashee said, would doubtless, on his return, be gracious to us, and give us fine robes of honour, and treat us even better than before.

About sunset on the 23rd, as Stoddart and myself were pacing up and down a small court of twenty feet long, which encloses our prison, one of the citadel doorkeepers came and desired us both to sit down in a corner; we complied, wondering what would follow, and presently saw heads peering at us from the adjoining roofs, when we understood that the Ameer's heir, a youth of seventeen, had taken this way of getting a sight of the Feringhee Elchees. We must have given him but a poor impression in the remains of our clothes, and with heads and beards uncombed for more than five months.

On the 23rd, Jooma Bai was accosted by a man named Makhzoom, known to Stoddart, who gave him a token, and a note written in such bad grammar as scarcely to be understood, in which he said one Juleb arrived lately from Khiva, mentioned that he saw Pottinger Sahib there, and another person named Moosa having come, bringing a letter from Pottinger Sahib, who, he says, is at Khiva, with the Elchee of Mahomed Shah.

Authentic history here terminates. Beyond this all is doubt and conjecture. On the 28th of May, Stoddart despatched an official letter to the Indian Government,* which was forwarded with Conolly's journals; and at this point we lose altogether the track of the footprints which the Bokhara captives have left on the great desert of time. That they perished miserably is certain. "No change has taken place in our treatment," wrote Stoddart—it is the last sentence penned in the Bokhara prison which seems to have reached its des-

* An abstract of this letter was forwarded by another route, and it reached John Conolly at Caubul on the 4th of July. In this letter, Stoddart reports the success of the Ameer at Kokund. "The Ameer," he wrote, "entered Kokund on the 11th of May, and gave it up to pillage—destroyed its rulers—unpeopled its capital, and is now on his return, having distributed the different governments among his own Bokharan chiefs. He is become master of immense treasure, and will

now probably march against Khiva, which, unless saved by some demonstration from Persia or Afghanistan, must fall in August or September, after a short campaign." With reference to the efforts of the Russian Mission, he says: "The Russian Mission left this towards the end of April. I feel convinced that Colonel Boutenoff's kind desire to procure our release failed solely in consequence of the unreasonableness of the Ameer."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

tionation—"though hopes, so long proved to be deceitful, are held out to us on the return of the chief." But the Ameer, glutted with conquest, returned from the Kokund expedition, and ordered them out to death. They died by the hands of the public executioner. But the precise period of their death is not with certainty to be ascertained.

There is but scanty evidence to enable us to determine the point. That which is most credible is the evidence of one Saleh Mahomed, a youth whom Major Todd despatched from Herat to join Captain Conolly's suite. His story is, that in the month of June, 1842, Stoddart and Conolly were executed by order of the Ameer; that he derived his information from one of the executioners; and that he saw their graves. On the 17th of June, it is related, they were taken out of their prison, and, in the presence of an assembled multitude, led into a small square. Their hands were bound together before them. Their graves were dug before their eyes. Stoddart was first marked for death. He cried aloud against the tyranny of the Ameer; and his head was cut off with a knife. Conolly was then offered his life, on condition that he would adopt the Mussulman faith. But he indignantly rejected the proposal. "Stoddart," he said, "became a Mussulman, and yet you kill him: I am prepared to die." And then Arthur Conolly, full of faith in the merits of his Redeemer, stretched forth his neck, and died.*

* General Pollock officially reported Captain Conolly's death, from Caubul, in a letter dated September 30; but he added: "The only authority for the death of this very intelligent officer is conveyed in a Persian letter from a native of Caubul, who writes from Bokhara to Moollah Ahmed Khan, of this city, saying, 'Tell Moostafah (Captain A.C.'s servant) that his uncle, whom he left here sick, saying he was a great traveller and had visited Kokund, was taken very ill, and though we gave him medicine and did all in our power, it was of no avail. It was the will of God that he should die.' Moostafah and Moollah Ahmed Khan are both of opinion that Captain A. Conolly is the person alluded to, and as the

There is nothing more painful than this in all the history of the Central-Asian war. It would be unjust to encourage a belief in the reader's mind that efforts were not made to compass the liberation of Colonel Stoddart. From the time when Major Pottinger first received at Herat intimation of his friend's captivity, and wrote to the Ameer a protest against the outrage he had committed, to a date long subsequent to the deaths of Stoddart and Conolly, continual efforts were made, both from the side of India and of England, to accomplish this great object. Todd did all that he could do from Herat; Abbott and Shakespear did all that they could do from Khiva; Macnaghten did all that he could do from Caubul; Lord Auckland did all that he could do from Calcutta. From London, Lord Palmerston directed our ambassadors at St. Petersburg and Constantinople to obtain the agency of the Courts at which they were resident; and both the Sultan and Count Nesselrode wrote urgent letters to Bokhara in behalf of the British prisoners.* But when all this is related, it still appears that more regard might have been shown for Stoddart's position, and that if there had been greater promptitude

letter proceeds to say that the effects of the deceased are at Bokhara, and can be sent when required; and as Moostafah had no uncle, to whom could the description apply? I fear there can be no reason to doubt the death of the above-named officer. Colonel Stoddart is, from native report, said to be alive, and still in confinement."—*[MS. Records.]*

This is mere conjecture; and by no means tallies with the more credible account of the execution of the two prisoners. On the 3rd of November, 1842, the Supreme Government assumed that Conolly was still alive. [See letter from Mr. Maddock quoted *ante*, page 518, note.] But the home authorities adopted Saleh Mahomed's

story, and struck Stoddart's name out of the army list, from the 17th of June, 1842. I believe this really to have been the date of their deaths. Major Rawlinson, on the morning of the 16th of September, 1842, met one of Stoddart's servants near Caubul, and the man, whom he knew, informed him that he had come direct from Bokhara, having started immediately after the execution of his master.—*[MS. Notes.]* The reader may consult the works of Captain Grover and Dr. Wolff.

* See the *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1845, for an account of these efforts. The paper derives additional value from the assignment of its authorship to Sir John M'Neill.

in answering the references made by him to the home authorities, he might have taken advantage of a favorable change in the feelings of the Ameer, and of his own circumstances, to take his departure from Bokhara. Certain it is that Stoddart felt acutely the culpable indifference to his fate displayed by the British Government. As far back as the July of the preceding year he had written:

News from me you will not expect, nor have I the least word of interest to offer you, except that I am waiting the replies of government, before I am finally released and take my departure. Nothing can be more slack than the time and means taken to provide me with those replies, and my disgust perfectly negatives any attempt to write a commonly agreeable note. My last news from Caubul, dated June 6, says that poor Todd is there awaiting, if possible, a mitigation of his sentence. Conolly is not yet here from Kokan, nor have my messengers to him yet returned. They conveyed the orders from Caubul, and an invitation from the Ameer, to return by this route.*

* *Colonel Stoddart to Major Rawlinson: Bokhara, July 7, 1841. MS. Correspondence.* It may be gathered from this letter that Stoddart had no intention of awaiting Conolly's arrival at Bokhara; and that Conolly proceeded thither under orders from Caubul, and an invitation from the Ameer. An attempt has been made to control, in some measure, the flood of sympathy which sets in so strongly towards Arthur Conolly, by asserting that he was not authorised to proceed even as far as Kokund, and that he therefore brought his misfortunes down upon his own head. But I have before me the strongest proof that Conolly was authorised by the Supreme Government to proceed to Kokund, and to use his best endeavours to obtain the liberation of Colonel Stoddart. In a letter, an official copy of which is now before me, the Chief Secretary writes to the Envoy and Minister: "As in the

present aspect of affairs it does not seem necessary to continue the restriction which had at first been imposed, his Lordship in Council authorises you to permit Captain Conolly to proceed from Khiva to Kokund, if he should think it expedient, and if he finds that he can do so without exciting serious distrust and jealousy at the former place. In his personal intercourse with the Khan of Kokund, he will be guided by the instructions which have been issued, prescribing the purport of his written communications. Captain Conolly may, in such a journey, find increased means of using an useful influence at Bokhara for the release of Colonel Stoddart; and his Lordship in Council need not add, that he would wish every such means to be employed with the utmost earnestness and diligence for that purpose."—[*Mr. Maddock to Sir W. Macnaghten: Dec. 28, 1840. MS. Records.*]

On the 28th of February, 1842, he wrote again, as a kind of endorsement to one of Conolly's letters:

TO THE SECRETARY OF GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.

SIR,

The Governor-General in Council will be informed by the accompanying abstract how far my position here [*and that of Captain Conolly*] has been sacrificed.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

CHARLES STODDART.

The words within brackets were erased—most probably by Conolly.*

But Stoddart, though he may have resented the injustice of sacrificing him to no purpose, was ready to become a sacrifice if, by so being, he could promote the interests of his country. "I beg sincerely," he wrote on the 5th of April, "that no one will regret any sacrifice of me, for it is nothing at all. It may yet not be requisite—but if it be, I regard the probable result, from the action of government in doing justice to others, and bringing all these countries to reasonable conduct, as fully compensating a much greater sacrifice than that of so humble an individual as I am."† If anything could increase the sorrow with which we contemplate the fate of this brave man, it would be the perusal of such noble sentences as these.

It was under a high and chivalrous sense of duty to his government that Colonel Stoddart continued to face the dangers of his position at Bokhara, after he might have escaped from them; and it was under an equally

* Two other notes were written by the prisoners on the back of this paper: one to Miss Stoddart at Norwich, and the other to John Conolly at Caubul. "Don't believe all you hear or may hear," wrote Stoddart. "Keep all friends informed of my health, and don't let them be disturbed by rumours," wrote Conolly.

† *MS. Correspondence.*

strong sense of duty that Captain Conolly made his way to the inhospitable city. To describe them officially as 'innocent travellers,' was clearly a misapplication of language; and yet, when on the famous 1st of October, 1842, Lord Ellenborough addressed the following letter to the Ameer of Bokhara, he so described them both:

Simlah, October 1st, 1842.

A.C.

The Queen of England, my royal mistress, has sanctioned my coming to India, to conduct its government, and direct its armies.

On my arrival I found that great disasters had befallen those armies, and much injury had been inflicted on my countrymen and the people of India by the treacherous Afghans, under Mahomed Akbar Khan.

In forty days from the time when I directed the British armies, reinforced from India, to move forward, three great victories have been gained over the Afghans; the city and citadel of Ghuznee have been destroyed, and now the Balla Hissar of Caubul is in my power.

Thus, by God's aid, have I afflicted with merited punishment the murderers of their own king and of a British minister. In this I have avenged the cause of all sovereigns and of all nations.

The wife and family of Mahomed Akbar Khan are prisoners, and my soldiers are now conducting them to the sea.

Thus are the wicked punished, even in their wives and families.

I hear that you, too, have gained great successes, at which I rejoice, if you had just ground of complaint against your enemy.

It is in the midst of successes that clemency most becomes the conqueror, and gives to him an extent of permanent fame which often does not attend on victory.

I was informed, when I reached India, that you detained in confinement two Englishmen, supposing them to have entertained designs against you. This must have been your reason, for no prince detains an innocent traveller.

I am informed that they are innocent travellers. As individuals they could not entertain designs against you; and I know they

were not employed by their government in such designs, for their government is friendly to you.

Send them away towards Persia. It will redound to your honour. They shall never return to give you offence, but be sent back to their own country.

Do this as you wish to have my friendship.

ELLENBOBOUGH.*

So manifest a repudiation of the official character of these two officers was not right; and it has been said, by one whose zeal and enthusiasm overlaid his judgment and discretion, but who is still entitled to honourable mention for his generous exertions in a hopeless cause,† that this very letter, in all likelihood, caused the execution of the prisoners. To describe them as travellers was, it is said, to proclaim them as spies. But the letter, however dangerous in itself, was at least harmless in its results. Before it was even written, the “innocent travellers” had gone to a land where the tyranny of princes could not reach them—where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.‡

* *MS. Correspondence.*

† Captain Grover.

‡ The extracts from Captain Conolly's letters and journals in this chapter are all made from the originals, and have, in some places, been deciphered with much difficulty, the manuscript, written in very minute characters, being greatly defaced by

damp and attrition. The perusal of the article in the *Edinburgh Review*, mentioned in a former note, enables me to supply the *hiatus* at page 504, the party there spoken of being the Meer Shub, or Master of the Police. At page 507, the name of the Russian colonel, Boutenoff, or Bouteneiff, is incorrectly printed Bontenoff.

CHAPTER VI.

[April—July: 1842.]

Affairs at Caubul—Elevation of Futteh Jung—Opposition of the Barukzyes—Arrival of Akbar Khan—His Policy—Attack on the Balla Hissar—Its Capture—Conduct of Akbar Khan—Barukzye Strife—Defeat of Zemaun Khan—Situation of the Hostages and Prisoners.

ON the death of Shah Soojah there commenced in Caubul a civil war. The whole city was thrown into convulsion. Futteh Jung, the second son of the murdered Shah, was proclaimed King. He was a man of weak understanding and infamous character; but he was believed to be friendly to the British Government, and he both hated and feared the Barukzyes. In himself a mere cypher, he could have done nothing to resist the encroachments of that powerful tribe; but Ameen-oollah Khan threw all the weight of his influence into the scales in favour of the Prince, and for some time they seemed equally balanced. The Naib cared nothing for the Prince; but he scented the royal treasures, and where the money lay the thickest, there was sure to be Ameen-oollah Khan.

In such troublous times as he had now fallen upon, the Prince had little taste for royalty. He remembered the fate of his father; and shrunk from the perilous excitement in which he was now about to be plunged.

Weak, too, as he was, he had sagacity enough to perceive that British power was again on the ascendant, and that whatever might be the result of the internecine strife which was now convulsing the capital, the supremacy of the British would be speedily re-established. It was expedient, therefore, he thought, to exert himself to the utmost, to obtain the favorable consideration of his old Feringhee allies; so he despatched the following letter to Captain Macgregor at Jellalabad, pleading both for himself and the memory of his murdered father :

HIGH IN PLACE,

The astounding event of the Shah's murder will be known to you. These treacherous tyrants, how tyrannical has been their act! If the Shah had not been united to the interests of the English, and had not attended and acted according to their advice, why should he have met with such an end, and why was he with them until the last, save that he hoped for their co-operation? They placed that ungrateful man, the Nizam-oodowlah (Oosman Khan), in power, and, by their acting according to his advice, matters came to such a pass. The Shah was aware of the treachery and disaffection of these persons, and how much soever he warned the English of this, it was of no use. It was because the Shah looked upon himself and the English as one, and attended to their pleasure, that the revolution took place; but this is known to you. The people, high and low, having sealed the Koran, sent their deputies with it to the Shah, stating that, if the Shah would forsake the English and ally himself to Islam, they would acknowledge him as their King. The Shah replied: "They and I are one; I am not separated from them." These bastards united and proclaimed the Shah an infidel. The Shah told the English to leave the cantonments and enter the Balla Hissar. The English did not consent to this. The Shah then endeavoured to conciliate the rebels, and night and day took oaths with them, with the view of carrying out the plans of the English. After the English left the cantonments, the people tendered to the Shah their submission, and endeavoured to persuade the King to attack Jellalabad. The Shah, by a thousand

devices, managed for two and a half months to put them off, in order that the British reinforcements might reach you. All the money that the Shah possessed he gave to the people. The people gave out that as the Shah would not go to Jellalabad, it was evident that he was friendly to the (British) infidels; he and they were one. The Shah felt embarrassed. He said to his confidential servants: "If I go to Jellalabad, lakhs of people would collect, and I should be unable to control them, and if by this time the British reinforcements had not arrived, it would be bad for the cause." The King, not knowing that the reinforcements had arrived, agreed to leave the city, but determined not to reach Jellalabad for twenty days—500,000 registered troops—and if he saw that it was to their advantage, he would join the British. On the 22nd Suffur (5th of April), the Shah's murder took place; on the 23rd Suffur, the Populzye nobles, and Amcen-oollah Khan, Loghuree, placed me on the throne. Even as the Shah was the friend and well-wisher of the English, so am I the friend and well-wisher of the English. On account of this friendship the King sacrificed his life and property. Had he accepted the friendship of the Mussulmans, the Shah would neither have been proclaimed an infidel, nor have thus met with his death from the hands of the Barukzyes. I am not pleased at having been placed on the throne by these people. If God places me on the throne, and if this country is again in the possession of the British, and they support me on the throne and in getting my revenge from these tyrants who killed the Shah, then I shall be pleased. The Shah sacrificed his life and property on account of the English, and now it is for them to uphold the reputation of his family. If in a few days your army does not arrive at Caubul, they will carry off the Shah's family. Write speedily, and tell me what I am to do, and what the family of the Shah is to do. It is necessary that the British should arrive soon. The death of the Shah has caused disunion among the chiefs. It is necessary that your army, with a large army of the Sikhs (God willing), should advance. When I was first placed on the throne, the people were considering the death of the Barukzyes, but on hearing that your army had arrived at Jellalabad, and that Mahomed Akbar had been defeated, the people agreed to suspend hostilities among us, and endeavoured to induce me to attack Jellalabad. Up to the present time this

is what they are striving to effect, but I tell them, that if they will in the first place avenge the Shah's death, then I'll go to Jellalabad. But I am powerless, and shall anxiously expect a letter from you. Tell me how to act. To defeat this people is at present very easy, for great is their disunion. Start soon for Caubul.*

The Prince had been proclaimed King by Ameen-oollah Khan and the Populzyes; but the Barukzyes refused to recognise him. Again they set up the Newab Zemaun Khan, and openly defied the Suddozye power. Soon the two contending parties broke out into open hostilities. Ameen-oollah Khan and his puppet were the first to draw the sword. On the 1st of May there was fighting from house to house—the whole city was in commotion. On the following day, success began to declare itself on the side of the Barukzyes. Ameen-oollah Khan made a false move, and disastrously overreached himself. Believing that the act would dishearten the Barukzyes, he seized the person of Meer Hadjee, the chief Moollah. But very different was the real from the anticipated effect of this outrage. Nearly all the townspeople, before neutral, rose to avenge this insult offered to their High Priest. The Kohistanees joined them. The Hadjee was released. But popular indignation ran high against Ameen-oollah Khan. His house was burnt. His property was plundered. His servants were seized. Compelled to seek safety in flight, he flung himself into the Balla Hissar.

The Prince made a show of welcoming him, but secretly declared that he would willingly surrender him and his Populzye associates to the British, if Pollock would advance upon Caubul—that one of his main objects, indeed, in opening the gates to them was to have

* *MS. Records.*

the rebels more securely in his power.* The Naib knew that his position was a dangerous one, and declared that he would throw himself on the mercy of the British and take his chance of being hanged. There was a more unrelenting enemy beyond the walls of the Balla Hissar. The Barukzyes were eager to destroy him.

The contest now raged furiously. The guns of the Balla Hissar were opened upon the city. Multitudes of the townspeople fled in dismay. There were 5000 men in the citadel; there was no lack of provisions. The money was all in the hands of the Prince; and he disbursed it freely to his adherents. But the Barukzyes were miserably poor. They could only raise money by the sale of jewels and the exaction of fines; and the Kohistanecs and others who flocked to their standard envied the fortunate followers of the more opulent Prince.†

It was not likely that Akbar Khan would regard with unconcern these proceedings at the capital. He was awaiting the return of Captain Mackenzie from Jellalabad, when intelligence of the disturbed state of affairs at Caubul was brought to him. Determining first, however, to learn the result of the mission to General Pollock's camp, he resolved to set out for the scene of

* On the 5th of May, Mohun Lal wrote: "The Prince (Futteh Jung) is very, very anxious that the General should march to Caubul; he appears now involved in difficulties, and undoubtedly is friendly to our government. He says he would not allow Ameen-oollah and the Populzyerebels to come into the palace, the evening they were obliged to leave the city, but by allowing them to come in, he entertained two objects. Firstly, to employ their services against the enemies of both states (the Barukzyes, who murdered the Envoy and also his father, the King, placed by the

English Government on the throne) till the arrival of General Pollock. Secondly, he may keep them quietly in his possession, and catch them as rebels, when you approach."—[*MS. Records.*]

† "The Prince," said Mohun Lal, "is of course very liberal to those that espouse his cause, while the Barukzyes pay very little by selling jewels and finery. The Kohistanecs or disciples of Meer Hadjee are towards the Barukzyes; but they groan to receive money lesser than those who are with the Prince."—[*MS. Records.*]

strife, and to take one or two of the English officers with him. Mackenzie returned on the 3rd of May, and was immediately despatched by the Sirdar on a second mission to Jellalabad, whilst Akbar Khan, taking Pottinger and Troup with him, set out on the following day for the capital.

Arrived at Caubul, he played his game with some address. Sedulously giving currency to the intelligence that he had been in treaty with General Pollock, who was said to have recognised his authority, he enhanced his own importance in the eyes of his countrymen, and sowed disappointment among the adherents of the royal party. Many who had before been neutral; now, believing that the British were on amicable terms with the Sirdar, openly espoused his cause. Khan Shereen Khan and the Kuzzilbashs had hitherto remained inactive; but feeling the importance of their coadjutancy, Akbar Khan made strenuous efforts to obtain it, and gained at last a promise of support.* From day to day there was continual strife and much fighting. The advantage was for the most part on the side of the Barukzyes. The Prince had thrown up some outworks round the Balla Hissar; but partly owing to the weakness and partly to the treachery of the guards, they had been carried by the enemy.† Pottinger witnessed some

* "Khan Shereen Khan," wrote Mohun Lal, on the 9th of May, "came last night to me and said, that the Barukzyes press upon him to side with them to oppose the Prince; and if he does agree he is sure he will be ruined. He says he is going to send his wives to some of the country forts, and then either go into the Balla Hissar or wait upon you at Jellalabad; and then he thinks that the whole of the Persians will follow him."—And again, on May 10th: "Yesterday, about noon, . . . Mahomed Akbar Khan came in per-

son to Khan Shereen Khan, and persuaded him, after a long talk, to side with him to oppose the Prince towards Bence Hissar. When Mahomed Zemaun Khan heard this he got jealous, and sent a message to Khan Shereen Khan, if he did not go himself or send his son to assist Soojah-ool-Dowlah, as the Newab had requested him, he had better not go, with Mahomed Akbar too. The latter at last succeeded."—[MS. Records.]

† "When Mahomed Akbar," wrote Mohun Lal, "appeared in the field

of these engagements, and wrote of them as most contemptible affairs.

It soon became only too probable that the Balla Hissar itself would fall before the Barukzyes. The energy and vigour of Akbar Khan and his confederates greatly exceeded that of the wretched Prince and his few interested supporters. Fearful of this, Futteh Jung continued to write pressing letters to the British authorities at Jellalabad, urging them to push on to his relief, and Mohun Lal gave cogency to the request by setting forth the probability of the Balla Hissar falling into the hands of the Barukzyes, and the strength which that party would derive, not only from the occupation of such a commanding position, but from the possession of the royal treasures. Like his father, however, the Prince continued to declare that his money was failing, and to request the British to supply him with funds to carry on the war. But more than all he clamoured for the advance of the British army. On the 11th of May he wrote to Captain Macgregor:

The reason of the present contest is this. I wished to excite a dispute between the Barukzyes and the other wicked men, with a view that they should have no leisure even to touch their own heads, and thus the English army may reach here unmolested. To effect this cause, whatever gold and silver I had has been paid to the people, with the object of securing the interests of the British.* Now I have very little cash remaining in the treasury—enough only to support me for some ten or

opposite the first or distant fort, Abdul Salem became traitor, and waited on Mahomed Akbar, who gave him a horse and desired him to go to his village. Upon this the people of the Prince, who were stationed in the forts between the fort of Abdul Salem and Balla Hissar, became disheartened and cowardly, obliged to desert the forts without fighting, and fly to the Balla Hissar. Mahomed Akbar's people followed the fugitives to the very gates of the Balla Hissar, and possessed the gun of the Prince. Mahomed Akbar had taken Major Pottinger also with him to the fight."

—[*MS. Records.*]

* "In consequence of establishing the British harmony."—[*Mohun Lal's Translation.*]

fifteen days more. After that period, without assistance from the British, I shall be reduced to the greatest difficulty. The men of the world are the disciples and worshippers of money. If you will not raise the victorious standard of the British troops quickly, or do not send me reinforcements within a few days, all the people will desert me on account of not having money, and the Barukzyes will then have the upper-hand over me.

If the Barukzyes establish their power, serious evil is to be apprehended; and the household of the British ally (Shah Soojah) will be destroyed. After this there will be nothing in store for us but repentance and disgrace. It is as clear to all people as the sun, that I am soliciting the assistance of the friends and nations of my late father. In delaying this object many dangers may arise, and much harm may befall the needy. In such a crisis as this, all objects will be easily gained; and the affairs which are now reduced to a state of disorder will, without much difficulty, be brought into order again.

If you are delaying your march on account of supplies of grain, you need not care for this. If it pleases God that I should recover my authority, there will be thousands of "Khurwars" (measures of ten maunds) of grain, as well as plenty of fodder for the horses.

I have heard that the Bombay forces have reached Candahar, and also marched thence to this quarter. It would be highly desirable, if the victorious army of Calcutta should possess this country before the arrival of the Bombay forces, that it should show the world that your arms alone have gained the victory. Although the army of both sides belongs to the same government, I write thus because I wish you well.*

On the day after this letter was written, three holy men presented themselves before the Prince, with overtures of peace from the Sirdar. They set forth that whatever oaths Futteh Jung might desire the Barukzye chief to swear to him, would be solemnly sworn on the Koran. "Of what avail are oaths," asked the Prince; and sending for several Korans from another apartment, showed the *Syuds* how they were covered

* *MS. Records.*

with the seals of the Barukzye, the Douranee, the Caubullee, the Persian, and the Kohistanee chiefs. "This," added the Prince, "is God's holy book, in which all the faithful believe. Look at these seals and the oaths of fidelity written upon the margin, declaring that the enemies of the royal family are the enemies of Mahomed—and yet the Barukzyes have murdered the King, my father. If there be any other Koran sent from Heaven, let the Barukzyes swear solemnly upon it—this has been tried too often, and too often found wanting." The Syuds were then dismissed. Nothing was done towards a satisfactory arrangement. So Mahomed Shah Khan was sent to conduct the negotiations with the Suddozye Prince.

What were the proposals made to the Prince, and in what light he regarded them, may be gathered from the letter which, on the following day, he addressed to Captain Macgregor:

The circumstances of this quarter are as follows. Since the arrival of Mahomed Akbar Khan, the Barukzyes at the head of the Ghilzyes, Caubullees, and the Kohistanees, attacked the trenches I had built out at a distance. Some of them were taken by the enemy on account of the weakness of my guards, and others in consequence of the treachery of my people. All the trenches round the Balla Hissar have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and we are now in a perfect siege. Yesterday, Mahomed Shah Khan, Ghilzye, came to treat with Ameen-oollah Khan into the Balla Hissar, and the result of their negotiation, after solemn oaths, was as follows:—That I should be acknowledged as King—Mahomed Akbar Khan as Minister of State—and that Ameen-oollah Khan should hold the situation of Deputy ("Naib") under the minister. After this, Mahomed Shah Khan was brought to my presence, and I was obliged to give him a "Khelat;" but agreeably to the advice of my well-wishers, I deferred giving my acquiescence to the result of their negotiation for two or three days to come.

They have made four proposals to me,—Firstly, that I should allow Mahomed Akbar Khan to be my minister, and Ameen-

oollah Khan his deputy. They are then both to raise an army and to go and fight with the English forces coming up to Caubul. Secondly, they will stand neutral, if I like; but I must prepare to go and oppose the British troops. Thirdly, if I am powerful, I must get ready to wage war with the Barukzyes. Fourthly, that I should take the whole family of the late King, and go wherever I like to go with them.

It appears that Ameen-oollah Khan, on account of our weakness, has consented to their proposals, and has therefore gone out of the Balla Hissar to have a conference with Mahomed Akbar Khan. These proposals have perplexed me greatly, and I am lost in speculation. If I were to appoint Mahomed Akbar Khan my minister, he would raise a force to oppose the English, and I should be forced to give up my artillery to him, which will be a dangerous business. In case of my refusal, the family of the late martyr (King) will be outraged.

My anxiety for your departure from Jellalabad for Caubul appears thoroughly useless. It is now forty days since your victorious army has passed up through Khybur, and you have not yet left Jellalabad. I endeavoured to excite a dispute among the rebels, with the view that the English army should reach here without opposition. Although I have successively sent letters through Mohun Lal, asking you to advance immediately to this side, but no symptoms of the kind have yet appeared. In such delay dangerous evils are to be apprehended.

It is a long time that I have deputed and entrusted Meerza Ameen-oollah with my verbal messages to you; but no answer has yet reached me about it. You should quickly reply to my letters, as well as the messages I have sent you by him, and also let me know the day of your march, as I am now in much perplexity. If there be any hope of your immediate advance, I will undergo every hardship to defend the Balla Hissar, and engage the rebels in fight. In case of any more delay the object will be lost, and an easy end will be obtained with the utmost difficulty hereafter. What can I write you more than this?*

Feeling himself utterly powerless to resist the demands of the Barukzyes, for all his principal supporters were deserting him, the Prince now placed himself in

the hands of Ameen-oollah Khan, who went out to a conference with Mahomed Shah Khan, which mutual distrust nearly strangled in the womb, and consented to the first of these propositions.* Futteh Jung was to be

* With reference to these negotiations, Mohun Lal writes, on the 13th of May: "Mahomed Shah Khan came out and stopped near the tomb, at a distance from the gate of the Balla Hissar, called Shah Shahdeed. He sent a message to Ameen-oollah that he wanted to speak, and begged he would come out to meet him. To this an answer was sent, that if Mahomed Shah would come close to the gate, Ameen-oollah would receive him there. Mahomed Shah, apprehending treachery, declined going too near the gate; and upon this Ameen-oollah sent his son as a hostage for the safety of Mahomed Shah; but he did not retain the hostage, but advanced with a few men to meet Ameen-oollah. They sat and had a secret conference, which lasted some time; after which, Mahomed Shah Khan went to Mahomed Akbar. After two hours he returned to Ameen-oollah, who conducted him to the presence of Futteh Jung in the Balla Hissar. He said to the Prince, that Mahomed Akbar begged him not to raise disputes amongst the Mussulmans at a time when all the followers of Mahomed ought to unite against the infidels. If he were a friend of the Mussulman cause he should embrace one or other of four propositions. (The terms stated agree with those in the Shah-zadah's letter.) Agreeably to the advice of Ameen-oollah, the Prince was obliged to give his consent to the first proposal. On this he gave a very handsome Khelat to Mahomed Shah Khan, who returned to Mahomed Akbar. This morning Mahomed Zemaun Khan, hearing of the negotiations, asked who was Mahomed Akbar Khan that he should enter into agreements with the Prince without his permission. Having said this, he ordered the guns to open upon the palace. Upon this Mahomed Akbar sent word to the gunners, that if they fired any more their cars should be cut off. He also begged the Newab not to do anything of the kind until he received his final advice. Ameen-oollah has now gone to the camp of Mahomed Akbar, who received him with much cordiality. . . . The Prince has sent me a message that he agreed to the first proposal on being deserted by all his people. If he had not done so, Ameen-oollah Khan would have seized him and given Akbar Khan possession of the Balla Hissar; but he says, that when Akbar asks for money from him to pay and raise the forces against us, he will put off the payment from day to day, saying that he has no money. . . . He has sent out all the Populzyes, saying that he does not trust any one. He has now the protection only of a few Arabs of the Balla Hissar and 1500 Indians. He has no courage—otherwise no one could take the Balla Hissar. Mahomed Akbar has acknowledged the supremacy of the Prince only because he is cunning; and his object is to arrest the internal disputes for the present, get hold of the Prince, and possess himself of his money, guns, &c., under the mask of friendship, and if unsuccessful in this design, he will undoubtedly get the money and all the military stores to fight with us, which is his fervent desire. Ameen-oollah went over to Akbar, because he found that all the Douranees and his followers were traitors, and had gone over to the Barukzyes, notwithstanding they got from him thousands of gold mohurs. He thought, that having

the nominal occupant of the throne. Akbar Khan was to be minister; and Ameen-oollah Khan, his Naib, or deputy. It was the object of the Sirdar to arrest the internal dissensions which were so weakening the great national and religious cause, to obtain possession of all the available money and munitions, and then to carry on the war with new vigour against the infidels.

But Mahomed Zemaun Khan was the recognised chief of the Barukzye party; and he now asked on what authority the Sirdar ventured without his sanction to make peace with the Suddozyes. There appeared to be every chance of an open rupture between them; and scarcely had Akbar Khan concluded his negotiations with the Prince, then the Newab made a hostile demonstration, attacked the Balla Hissar, but was beaten back with much slaughter. It was, however, currently reported that a secret understanding existed between the two Barukzye chiefs, whose common object it was to obtain possession of the Balla Hissar. Two or three days afterwards they were, outwardly, again united. An attempt had been made to lure the Prince to an interview with Akbar Khan beyond the walls of the Balla Hissar. The Arabs in the garrison, who remained true to the royal family, dissuaded the Prince from exposing himself to the treachery of the Sirdar; mutual distrust soon

made himself the enemy of the British and of the Barukzyes, he would make peace with Akbar, and so shelter himself under the wings of the Sirdar. The people say that the Barukzyes will seize Ameen-oollah; but others say that Akbar is too wise to allow this step to be taken, as he will find the Naib serviceable in the present crisis. . . . Mahomed Akbar intends to get Captain Conolly, &c., into his possession. Since Akbar Khan came here, all the chiefs have gone over to

him, some in fear, and others with the hope that we shall be driven out by him, and that he will become the master of the country. Mahomed Zemaun Khan is deserted by a great many people, and Mahomed Akbar joined by them. There is a dispute expected between him and Mahomed Akbar, who says that the English will not march for Caubul from Jellalabad for two months to come."—
[MS. Records.]

engendered a rupture between them; and it was plain, that if some arrangement could not be promptly made between the Prince and the Barukzyes, through the agency of the Kuzzilbash chief, the Balla Hissar, the treasure, and the guns, would speedily fall into the hands of Akbar Khan and his confederates.

The Barukzyes now laid siege, with redoubled vigour, to the Balla Hissar. The Prince was well-nigh deserted.* He called upon Oosman Khan, Shah Soojah's old minister, to aid him, but upon some frivolous pretext he declined to league himself with so perilous a cause. It was assiduously given out that the Prince was holding the Balla Hissar only for the Feringhees; and, as the national feeling became stronger and stronger against him, if it had not been for the strength of the place itself, he would hardly have been able to hold it for a day against the Barukzyes. But the fortress held out, in spite of the weakness of the Prince and the garrison; and so at last the Barukzyes began to undermine the works. "Last night," wrote Futeh Jung to General Pollock, at the beginning of June, "they made an assault; now they have made mines in every direction. My affairs are in a very critical state. . . . If you do not come quickly, the Balla Hissar and the throne will be lost, and you will be a sufferer. At this time I am at my last gasp. More-

* According, however, to our English notions, the contest was very far from a vigorous one. John Conolly wrote from Caubul: "The contending parties continue to amuse themselves with firing long shots with their guns and jezails, and the Balla Boorj is attacked—that is, fired at for three or four hours by one or two thousand men every third night or so."—[*MS. Correspondence.*] Conolly says, in the same letter: "There is an anecdote here, that three Feringhees arrived at the Balla Hissar in disguise, and that on hearing this the Barukzyes withdrew their outposts to a considerable distance." In another letter (May 26) he says: "The Prince holds out still in the citadel. The Barukzyes have been battering at the Upper Boorj, and firing into the Balla Hissar. According to our ideas, their efforts have been almost harmless; but the garrison, I fear, have become alarmed, and would be glad to see relief."—[*MS. Records.*]

over, there is nothing in the magazine.* Now is the crisis.”†

On the 7th of June the Balla Hissar fell into the hands of the Barukzyes. On the preceding day, after an ineffectual attempt at negotiation, Akbar Khan had issued orders for the springing of the mine. But it had not been carried sufficiently far to damage the works.‡ The explosion killed a large number of the besiegers; whilst the storming party was driven back by the garrison with considerable loss. The troops of the Shah-zadah are said to have “behaved very nobly, and like heroes, to have defeated the assault.” Mohun Lal reported, but with some exaggeration, that not less than 1000 of the followers of Akbar Khan fell upon this day.

But the elation of the garrison was but short-lived. On the following day the Barukzyes brought up some heavy ordnance and began to cannonade the Balla Hissar. The defenders then lost heart. The Hindostanee and Arab fighting men, who composed the bulk of the Prince’s followers, began to tremble for the safety of their families, and to call upon Futteh Jung to enter into some accommodation with their assailants. Thus deserted by his garrison, who declared that they would open the gates to the enemy if the Prince did not sub-

* The Prince had no powder. Mohun Lal, however, contrived to procure some aid to convey it to the Balla Hissar, through the agency of the Kuzzilbash chiefs.

† On the 5th of June, Mohun Lal wrote to Sir R. Shakespear, Pollock’s military secretary: “If you will not march immediately, or in four days, to Gundamuck, you will lose all your prisoners, and the Barukzyes will possess the riches of the late Shah, as well as the Balla Hissar and the artillery.” — [*MS. Records.*] John Conolly’s letters, written about this

time, contain the same urgent exhortations to advance, as the only means of saving the Balla Hissar and the prisoners.

‡ The mine was altogether the merest bug-bear. It frightened the Prince and the garrison; but Mohun Lal assured the former that it could not by any possibility do him any harm, as it had not been properly dug, nor run sufficiently far under the works to damage them, even if the strength of the masonry were not such as to bid defiance to the attempt.

mit, he had nothing to do but to abandon the defence, and to suffer the Barukzyes to enter the Balla Hissar.

With many professions of fidelity and demonstrations of respect, Akbar Khan presented himself before the Prince, declared that he had the prosperity of the royal family at heart, and that he himself was merely the servant of the Suddozyes. Futteh Jung offered him money; but he declined it—offered him a dress of honour, but he meekly refused to wear it. He wanted nothing, he said, but the prosperity of the Prince, and he could not wear the dress of honour until he had adjusted all his differences with Mahomed Zemaun Khan. But these differences were not very easily to be adjusted. The Newab was unwilling to recognise the sovereignty of Futteh Jung; and was jealous of the rising power of the Sirdar. Meeting after meeting was held, and many attempts were made to reconcile the conflicting interests of the two Barukzyc leaders. It was urged, on the one side, that if Futteh Jung were acknowledged as the nominal ruler of Afghanistan, all his wealth would be in the power of the chiefs, and that the war might then be waged against the infidels with every chance of success. But, on the other hand, it was asked by the friends of Zemaun Khan—and Meer Hadjee, the High Priest, adopted the same views—since during the lifetime of Shah Soojah the Newab had been chosen King by the chiefs and accepted by the nation, why should they now revert to the old Suddozye sovereignty, which the country had so emphatically repudiated?*

* *Correspondence of Mohun Lal MS. Records.* Futteh Jung continued to write to the British authorities that he had little or no money; and that if the British did not advance, the royal family would be ruined and disgraced. "It is well known to you," he wrote to General Pollock, "that Mahomed Akbar has made peace, with the view to derive wealth from me; but I know that I have none. If I could sell everything that I possess, I should not be able to raise a lakh of rupees."

As time advanced, the difficulties in the way of a reconciliation between the two parties seemed to thicken. The Newab declared that he was King—that Akbar Khan might hold the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Afghan army, but that Oosman Khan was to be the Wuzeer.* In the mean while, the Sirdar was gaining over the Kohistan chiefs, and preparing himself for the inevitable conflict. But the Kuzzilbashs now refused to league themselves with Akbar Khan, and talked of joining the British on their advance. There was no prospect of a reconciliation of the differences between the two Barukzye chiefs. The old Newab bitterly deplored the strife which seemed likely soon to plunge the city again into the miseries of war, and openly prayed that God might send General Pollock quickly, so that he and Akbar might fly from Caubul before they had caused bloodshed among the people by the violent arbitrement of their disputes.

Equally did Akbar Khan claim credit for his forbearance. On the 21st of June, after many fruitless

* The Newab had little money; but the most valuable jewels of Shah Soojah were in his possession. The Shah was wont to carry them about with him in a bag; and he had them in his possession at the time of his murder. "Mahomed Zemaun Khan," wrote Mohun Lal to Sir Richmond Shakespear, "has got hold of the most valuable jewels of the late King, who, report said, had them thrown into a ditch when Soojah-ood-Dowlah murdered him. This was seen by an Afghan at a distance, who after some days went to the place and took out the small bag of jewels, which he, being ignorant of their worth, sold them for 600 rupees. This was reported to the Newab, who imprisoned the bidders and got all the jewels from them. The bankers say that they are worth 50 lakhs of rupees, but here are no men to purchase them."—[*MS. Records.*] Akbar Khan had contrived to extract a considerable sum of money from the Prince. On the 17th of June, Mohun Lal reported that the Sirdar had received a lakh and a half of rupees from the royal treasury. On the 18th, John Conolly wrote that the Sirdar had drawn two lakhs, adding: "He has taken an inventory of all the property and treasure in the citadel; and has his own men there." † It will be a great consolation to us all," he wrote in conclusion, "if you will tell us that no negotiations beyond the ransom of the prisoners will ever be entered into with Akbar. He is certain/ the most uncompromising villain that ever lived."—[*Lieut. Conolly to Capt. Macgregor: Caubul, June 18, 1842. MS. Records.*]

attempts at an amicable adjustment of affairs, the two factions came into open collision. A battle was fought; and, "after an insignificant fight of two or three hours' duration," the Newab was defeated. He and his sons were taken. His house was plundered. The leading chiefs of his party were seized and subjected to every conceivable insult. The victory, indeed, was complete; but it was mainly achieved by the money which had been pillaged from the treasury of the Prince. Some of the most influential men of the Newab's party were bribed over to desert him; and he found, when it was too late, that he was betrayed.*

* "The reason of the overthrow of the Newab is the disaffection of some of the most influential men of his party—the chief one being Oosman Khan, who was bought over with 1000 gold mohurs. The Pultans also went over, and our host (Meer Hadjee) was bribed with 4000 gold mohurs, and during the fight his brother, Mahomed Dost, took an active part against the Newab. Poor old Zemaun Khan was a dupe throughout to Hotshur's (Akbar Khan's) perfidy, and a victim to misplaced confidence."—[Lieutenant John Conolly to Captain Macgregor: *Cabul*, June 23, 1842. *MS. Records*.]

Akbar Khan's own account of the affair, and of his subsequent treatment of Zemaun Khan, is on record in the following letter to the Shinwarree chiefs: "Up to the day of writing this, the 17th of Jamadi-ul-arwal (26th July), all is well here with me. As it was an object of paramount importance that in the contest with the race of misguided infidels the whole of the numbers of the true faith should be united together, and the attainment and perfecting of this object appeared indispensable, therefore did the whole of the devoted followers of the true faith consent to choose me as their head, and to place themselves under my com-

mand. All the tribes and leaders of the Douranees, Ghilzyes, and Kuzzilbashes and Kakulees and Kohistanecs, have submitted to me, and I have placed on the throne the King, high in power, majestic as Alexander, ambitious as Kai-Khusro, Shah-zadah Fntiel Jung, son of the late King, and caused the Khutha to be read and coin to be struck in his name, redoubted as that of Faridoon. Newab Mahomed Zemaun Khan, having in some respects opposed himself to my views and interfered with me, at length came to an open rupture, and commenced hostilities against me. After several of my people had been killed and wounded, then, and not till then, I, of necessity, gave the order to them to retaliate. In two hours the engagement was at an end; and all order being destroyed among the troops of the Newab, they were dispersed. His guns and magazines, stores and horses, and regiments and jezailchees, and other appendages of power which he had newly prepared, all fell into my possession. As the Newab was a part and parcel of myself—not wishing to reduce him to a state of poverty and want—I, on the same day, restored to him all his horses: the rest of his property I kept possession of. Since then, all the leaders of the different

The Prince was throned on the 29th of June. But he exercised no regal power. The Sirdar, who conferred upon him the title of sovereign mainly to conciliate the Populzyes, began rapidly to strip him of his wealth, and to reduce him to a mere pageant and a name.* After possessing himself of all the tangible property upon which he could lay his hands, he called in all the secretaries and managers of the royal household, and compelled

tribes have acknowledged my authority, and I firmly trust that all my future undertakings will in like manner be crowned with success, and that the object nearest the hearts of me and you, and all the race of Islam—viz., the extermination, root and branch, of the detested race of infidels, may be without difficulty accomplished. Set your mind perfectly at rest on this subject, and do not entertain any misgivings, and gird up your loins for action, and be ready with the fear-inspiring and punishment-inflicting Ghazees, and use your utmost exertions and efforts to close the Khybur road and intercept their dawk communications, that their messengers may not pass to and fro, and that no grain may reach them from any quarter; for this is the real way to defeat this misguided and detested race,—this is the real battle of martyrdom which you must fight: therefore consider this injunction as of the very first importance. In a short time, by the favour of God the Almighty, and the assistance of the founders of our religion, this humble servant of God, with a terror-inspiring army from this country, and an artillery thundering and flashing fire, and with jezailchees threatening like Mars, and with artillerymen like Saturn, and Ghazees, who march hand-in-hand with victory, will set out for your direction: and if it be the will of God, will soon clear the surface of that country, sweeping from it the rubbish from the bodies of the enemies of our religion. Mean-

while it behoves you, in anticipation of the arrival of the exalted standards, the emblems of victory, to spare no exertions to stir up the strife of religion, and send me constantly news of your welfare, and of the movements of the vile infidels, that according to your information I may take measures to counteract them. Futteh Mahomed, the son of Saadat Khan, is here, and will shortly leave me to join you with the Ghazees.”—[*MS. Records.*]

* “The Prince was seated on the throne on the 29th. Akbar constituted himself prime minister of all Afghans. The Hindostanee dependents on the Prince had been previously removed from the Balla Hissar, and none but his immediate attendants were allowed to remain—the garrison being composed of Akbar’s own soldiers. The remnant of the royal jewels, treasure, and property, even to a few silver cooking utensils, had been also made over to Akbar. It was Akbar’s intention to have deposed the Prince; and several meetings were convened to discuss the question. The resolution to crown the Prince was sudden, and suggested by an idea that the Populzyes who had connected themselves with Timour at Candahar might be induced to recognise the present arrangements in a preference to a Sud-dozye King under British auspices.”—[*Lieut. J. B. Conolly to Sir Richmond Shakespear: July 1, 1842. MS. Records.*]

them to give an account of their stewardship. He had taken up his residence in the Balla Hissar; was digging a ditch around the place; and laying in military stores. He then began to endeavour to compass the possession of all the hostages and captives, and to secure them against the chance of rescue by confining them in the Balla Hissar.

The situation of the English gentlemen at Caubul, who had resided so securely under the protection of the good Newab, now became more critical.* On the death of Shah Soojah the Caubullees had called upon Zemaun Khan to deliver them up to Meer Hadjee, the High Priest. The Newab had long resisted the demand. But the clamour of the people had drowned his prayers. His tears and intercessions were fruitless. At last he surrendered them to the Hadjee, imploring him to treat

* All the circumstances attending their surrender ought to be related. The incident is thus feelingly chronicled by Captain Johnson: "Two days after the death of Shah Soojah, the people of Caubul demanded that our hostages, who had been left under charge of Mahomed Zemaun Khan, should be given up to the care of the son of the late High Priest, Meer Hadjee. The former noble-hearted gentleman, than whom no father could have behaved more tenderly to his children, begged and entreated with tears that the separation should not take place—adding that he was willing to give up his own family to the popular will, but not the English gentlemen who had been entrusted to his care, and who were his honoured guests—that he would, if the people so willed it, make over to them his own son, with his sword round his neck, and his turban for a winding-sheet, to be dealt with according to their pleasure; but that force alone should deprive him of the society of his friends. When all entreaties failed, he hoped to work upon the feelings of the party

at the conference by telling them that their chief and his own sister and relations were in the hands of the British Government, and that vengeance would assuredly be dealt upon them if the English gentlemen sustained the slightest injury. On this, a grey-bearded old gentleman told him and the rest that they might make their minds perfectly easy as regarded the Afghan prisoners in India, as it was contrary to the uses of Englishmen to hurt a hair of the heads of their captives. The clamour of the people prevailed over all that the Newab could urge, and with many a bitter feeling did this amiable man make over the hostages to Meer Hadjee, with prayers and entreaties to the latter that he would behave kindly to them; and at the same time he sent with them to the latter's house all the females of his family, as the surest means of their protection; for how ever excited a Mussulman population may be, it is seldom or ever that they violate a harem."—[Captain Johnson's MS. Journal.]

them with kindness, and sending at the same time the ladies of his family to the priest's house that they might, in some sort, be a protection to the British captives. Under the guardianship of Meer Hadjee, Conolly and his associates remained until the beginning of July. By this time Akbar Khan was dominant in Caubul. He had determined to gain possession of the persons of the whole of the English hostages and prisoners in Afghanistan, and he now began to importune Meer Hadjee to send them to the Balla Hissar. Day after day he went, on this errand, to the High Priest's house; but for some time his importunities were fruitless.* At last, he tried the effect of money. The avarice of Meer Hadjee was notorious. Akbar Khan had bought him over to his cause; and now he bethought himself of buying the prisoners. He did not bid high for them. It appears that Akbar Khan offered 4000 rupees for the persons of the hostages, and that the offer was accepted.

* The letters of Mohun Lal, written at this time, show the efforts that were made to obtain possession of the hostages, and the amount of resistance offered: "Mahomed Akbar is going every day to Meer Hadjee, that he should give up Lieutenant Conolly, &c., and not oppose him, when he may send the prisoners to Toorkistan. If you have never written to Meer Hadjee, write to him now, and say that he is chief priest of Caubul, &c., and it is therefore expected that he will keep all our prisoners by him."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir Richmond Shakespear*: June 26, 1842. *MS. Records*.] "Gholam Mahomed Khan, Mooktean, has sent me a message through his son, Tej Mahomed, that he advised Meer Hadjee not to give Lieut. Conolly, &c., to Akbar; and he hopes that I have approved of his services. I replied, that he will be rewarded and made the minister of the country, if he keeps his word, and, being assisted by Meer Hadjee, prevents the removal of our

prisoners, if Akbar may intend to send them to any quarter. He sent me answer, as long as he and Meer Hadjee live, our prisoners shall not be removed."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear*: June 30, 1842. *MS. Records*.] "Mahomed Akbar sent the scoundrel Meerza Imaum Vourdee to Meer Hadjee, with the message that the Balla Hissar is safer than the city for the residence of Lieutenant Conolly, &c.; and he therefore hopes Meer Hadjee will send them to him. Meer Hadjee agreed to the proposal, and sent the officers into the Balla Hissar with the view that Akbar should not suspect that the reports of his stopping the prisoners is true, and thus to oppose him for few officers, he may hazard the chance of securing the whole of them before the time is arrived to perform his service on behalf of the prisoners."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear*: July 8, 1842. *MS. Records*.] Mohun Lal says nothing about the money.

The hostages were now conveyed to the Balla Hissar, where they remained under the immediate custody of Akbar Khan. Mohun Lal, who had been rendering good service to the British Government, by keeping the authorities at Jellalabad continually supplied with information relative to the events which were passing at Caubul, was seized by the Sirdar and tortured. The Moonshée had been residing in the house of the Kuzzilbash chief, Khan Shereen Khan; but now, early in July, Akbar Khan, having first seized the person of the host, contrived to obtain possession of the guest; and immediately began to extort money from him by the cruel agency of physical torture. It was not until General Pollock wrote an urgent letter to Akbar Khan, that the unhappy Moonshée was relieved from this terrible persecution.*

In the mean while, the British prisoners, who had been in custody at Budeeabad, were in a fort in the neighbourhood of Caubul. When last I spoke of them they were halting in the valley of Zandah, where they were detained for about the space of a month. On the 22nd of May they received orders to march on the following day for Caubul. The road lay along the track of the

* Mohun Lal's own account of his sufferings is worth quoting: "I have the honour to address you, for the information of Major-General Pollock, C.B., that Akbar Khan, on the night of the 11th inst. (July), put me in charge of Moollah Sald, Atchekzye, in whose house I was forced to lay down, and a couch placed over me, on which the people jumped, and are beating me with sticks in a very unmerciful manner. Akbar wants 30,000 rupees from me—says, otherwise, that he will pull out my eyes. All my body has been severely beaten. I cannot promise anything without government's order, but see myself destroyed. . . All my feet is wounded by bastinadoing."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear: July 14, 1842. MS. Records.*] "I suffer very much. Sometimes I am pinioned and a heavy stone is placed on my back, whilst the red pepper is burnt before my nose and eyes. Sometimes I am bastinadoed. In short, I suffer every conceivable agony. He wants 30,000 rupees, out of which he has hitherto got 12,000, after using me very rudely. The remainder, if not paid in the course of ten days, he says he will pull out my eyes, and burn my body with a hot iron."—[*Mohun Lal to Sir R. Shakespear: July 17. MS. Records.*]

slaughtered army, and the putrid corpses sickened the captives as they went. About three miles from Caubul, on the banks of the Loghur river, is the fort of Ali Mahomed, a chief of Kuzzilbash connexions. Here they were lodged in the apartments recently occupied by the ladies of the chief's family*—the best and most commodious quarters which the prisoners had yet enjoyed.

In Ali Mahomed's fort the prisoners led a life of comparative freedom. They had a spacious garden in which to exercise themselves. They had the use alike of the walks and of the fruits. They were suffered to bathe in the river. They were permitted to visit, and to receive visits from, their friends in the Balla Hissar. Many of them had the means of borrowing money from the Caubullees; and were able to purchase many luxuries which they had not enjoyed at Budecabad. Letters and papers from Jellalabad, from the provinces of India, and from old England, were brought to them without interruption. They had much to think about and much to discuss. Intelligence from Jellalabad and intelligence from Caubul came, in some shape, every day. Life was but little wearisome; there was abundant occupation for the mind, and abundant exercise for the body. And if it had not been that many of the party fell sick, and that ever and anon there reached them rumours of the intentions of Akbar Khan to carry them off to Toorkistan, they would have enjoyed as much happiness as prison-life can possibly yield.

* They were turned out of the fort, indeed, to make room for the prisoners, to the infinite annoyance of the unhappy chief, who made every possible excuse for not receiving them, but was overruled by Akbar Khan, who obtained admittance for them, in the first instance, on the plea that he only required accommodation for the night, and then urged that the fort would suit them better than any other place in the neighbourhood. It was altogether a most unfortunate occurrence for Ali Mahomed, as, subsequently, on the advance of the British, the fort was levelled with the ground, and the garden destroyed.

BOOK VIII.

[June—December: 1842.]

CHAPTER I.

[June—September: 1842.]

The Advance from Jellalabad—Instructions of Lord Ellenborough—The Question of Responsibility—Employment of the Troops at Jellalabad—Operations in the Shinwarree Valley—Negotiations for the Release of the Prisoners—The Advance—Mammoo Khail—Jugdulluck—Tezeen—Occupation of Caubul.

THE summer months passed away, and still left General Pollock at Jellalabad and General Nott at Candahar. Whether it were the intention of the Governor-General that they should advance upon Caubul, or fall back at once upon Peshawur and Quettah, was a problem of very difficult solution. Such data as were afforded them by the letters of Lord Ellenborough and his secretaries sufficed only to plunge them into a state of still deeper bewilderment and mystification. Every fresh letter seemed to render the obscurity more obscure. The Governor-General's instructions to Pollock and Nott at this time resembled nothing so much as those given to children in the "game of contraries"—to hold fast when they are ordered to let go, and to let go when

they are ordered to hold fast. Lord Ellenborough was, in effect, perpetually telling the generals that when he suggested to them to go forward it was their business to come back.

It is probable that Lord Ellenborough himself had no very clear perception, at this time, of the course which he purposed to pursue. He had made up his mind, he said, to save India in spite of every man in it who ought to give him support;* but it seemed to be his idea to save India rather by withdrawing all our troops within the Sutlej, than by striking a decisive blow for the re-establishment of our military supremacy in Afghanistan. It was his opinion that the danger of our position at that time arose from the absence of so large a body of troops from the provinces of Hindostan; and that we might better afford to leave our external injuries unredressed, than weaken our means of defence in India itself for the purpose of redressing them. Viewing the matter in this light, Lord Ellenborough thought less of redeeming the military character of the British nation than of bringing back the troops to Hindostan; and he would have brought them back without an effort at such redemption, if the almost universal voice, not only of the chief civil and military officers, but of the Anglo-Indian community at large,

* "I attach much weight," wrote Lord Ellenborough at the end of May, "to what Major Sleeman says of the disposition of the Mahomedans; but I am surprised that it has not occurred to him and to others, that whatever may be the disposition of the Mahomedans, it is the absence, not the presence of our troops, of whom more than three-fourths are Hindoos, that alone can lead the Mahomedans to act against us. The danger is in the position of the army, almost without communication with

India, too far off to return quickly at any season, unable from the season to return now, without adequate supplies of food or carriage. This is the danger which all the great statesmen in India would perpetuate if they could, and while they maintain it, destroy the confidence of the Sepoy and ruin our finances. *If I save this country, I shall save it in spite of every man in it who ought to give me support, but I will save it in spite of them all.*" —[*M.S. Correspondence.*]

had not been lifted up against so inglorious and degrading a concession. The opinions and desires of Pollock and Nott—of Robertson and Clerk—of Rawlinson, Outram, Macgregor, Mackeson, and others, who were eager for a forward movement, and little inclined to conceal their genuine sentiments under a cloak of official reserve—how little soever Lord Ellenborough may have been disposed outwardly to acknowledge their influence—were not without their effect. Public opinion he professed to despise. The judgments of the Press he pretended to hold in such absolute contempt, that he lived in habitual ignorance of all that emanated from it; but it is believed that this disregard of public opinion was rather a profession than a fact, and that Lord Ellenborough was shaken in his determination to bring back the armies to the provinces by the clamour that, from one end of India to the other, was raised against the obnoxious measure of withdrawal. He had by this time, too, received information from England that an inglorious retirement from the scene of our late humiliation, and the abandonment of all the brave men, tender women, and innocent children, in the hands of the Afghans, would be viewed with no satisfaction either by his old ministerial colleagues, or by the people of Great Britain. Many powerful external influences, therefore, roused him to a sense of the necessity of doing something in advance; but the “withdrawal policy” was emphatically his own, and he was resolute to preserve the shadow of it if he could not maintain the substance.

In this conjuncture, he betook himself to an expedient unparalleled, perhaps, in the political history of the world. He instigated Pollock and Nott to advance, but insisted that they should regard the forward movement solely in the light of a retirement from Afghanistan.

No change had come over the views of Lord Ellenborough, but a change had come over the meaning of certain words of the English language. The Governor-General had resolutely maintained that the true policy of the English Government was to bring back our armies to the provinces of India, and that nothing would justify him in pushing them forward merely for the re-establishment of our military reputation. But he found it necessary to yield to the pressure from without, and to push the armies of Pollock and Nott further into the heart of the Afghan dominions. To preserve his own consistency, and at the same time to protect himself against the measureless indignation of the communities both of India and of England, was an effort of genius beyond the reach of ordinary statesmen. But it was not beyond the grasp of Lord Ellenborough. How long he may have been engaged on the solution of the difficulty before him History cannot determine. But on the 4th of July it was finally accomplished. On that day Lord Ellenborough, who had entirely discarded the official mediation of the Commander-in-Chief,* despatched two letters to General Pollock and

* It was not until the 27th of August that the Commander-in-Chief was informed, by a letter from General Pollock, of the instructions sent to General Nott on the 4th of July. How entirely the Governor-General had set aside the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, and what Sir Jasper Nicolls thought both of Lord Ellenborough's conduct and of the advance on Caubul, may be gathered from the following extracts from his journal :

"June 6.—To my astonishment, Lord E., in consequence of General Pollock's complaints of want of carriage, has consented to his remaining beyond the Khybur till October, though he quotes the Duke of Wellington's dictum, that an army which

cannot be moved as you will is no army at all. He will thus have an unhealthy, difficult pass behind him for four or five months, and possibly involve us in another campaign. These changes are dreadful. I wish that I had nothing to do with them."

"June 30.—The Secret Committee review the proceedings of government, from December to February last, not with asperity, but with decided disapprobation of the uncertain policy of that time, and the contradictory resolutions and orders which were then passed. This is very well deserved, for it was then, in November or December, that government ought to have decided to leave the country or to resume our full control over it."

"August 8.—The wants of General

two to General Nott. In these letters he set forth that his opinions had undergone no change since he had declared the withdrawal of the British armies to the provinces to be the primal object of government; but he suggested that perhaps General Nott might feel disposed to retire from Candahar to the provinces of India by the route of Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad;* and that perhaps General Pollock might feel disposed to assist the retreat of the Candahar force by moving forward upon Caubul.

It has been seen, that on the 1st of June Lord Ellenborough had granted General Pollock a constructive permission to remain at Jellalabad until the month of October; and that General Pollock had determined to turn this permission to the best account.† The mind of

Pollock's army are put down at 6½ lakhs *per mensem*, and we are just going to send 20 to clear him off—the last, I believe and hope, which we shall send to be buried in the Punjab and Afghanistan. Twenty-one lakhs he had before."

"August 15.—General Nott has fixed on the 2nd of this month for leaving Candahar, and in two divisions—the Bombay troops by Quettah and Sukkur—the Bengal column by Dehra Ismael Khan. This is quite new to me, and may be either ordered by the General or suggested by Lord E."

"August 20.—His order as to retiring by Dehra Ismael Khan appears the effect of impulse. Its neglect of me I forgive, though a manifest slight; but I do not find that he has ordered the necessary supplies to be collected for the retreat through the Sikh territory, which is, in parts near that place, almost a desert."

"August 24.—The 3rd Dragoons, and another troop of horse artillery, are about to join Sir R. Sale at Futehabad. Can the General be now organising an advance on Caubul? Is he commanded to do so? Can he

effect it? Is he to encamp at Gunda-muck till Nott's attack on Ghuznee (if that take place)? It is curious that I should have to ask myself these questions; but so it is. I am wholly ignorant of the intended movements of either. Lord Ellenborough means to surprise friend and foe equally."

"August 27.—To-day I find, by a despatch from General Pollock, that General Nott has decided on returning to the provinces, *via* Ghuznee and Caubul. Lord E., by letter dated 4th of July, gave him a choice as to the line by which to withdraw, and he has chosen this—certainly the noblest and the worthiest; but whether it will release our prisoners and add to our fame, I cannot venture to predict. Lord E.'s want of decent attention to my position is inexcusable."—[*Sir Jasper Nicolls' MS. Journal.*]

* Some readers, not having maps before them, will better understand the nature of this retirement if I liken it to the case of a man wishing to retire from Reigate to London, and taking Dover and Canterbury in his way.

† See *ante*, page 474.

the statesman was running on retirement; the mind of the soldier on advance. The great obstacle either to retirement or to advance had been the scarcity of carriage. But in the early summer months every exertion had been made by the authorities in Upper India to procure carriage for the use of the armies in Afghanistan. Lord Ellenborough had exerted himself to obtain cattle; Mr. Robertson, the able and energetic Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, had exerted himself to obtain cattle.* The Governor-General threw his heart into the work, because he was eager to bring back the armies to Hindostan; the Lieutenant-Governor threw his heart into the work, because he was eager to push them on to Caubul. So it happened, that before the end of June, there was a sufficiency of cattle at General Pollock's disposal to enable him to do something; and he reported to government that his means of movement were such that he was able to make a demonstration in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad. Upon this, Lord Ellenborough wrote to him on the 4th of July that he was rejoiced to hear the General was able to do something; but that he (the General) must, on no account, think that any change had come over the opinions of government, which still inclined resolutely towards the withdrawal of the army at the earliest moment consistent with the health and efficiency of the troops.†

* The services rendered by Mr. Robertson to his country, at this time, have never been adequately acknowledged, except by General Pollock himself, who never lost an opportunity of expressing his gratitude for the assistance he had derived from the exertions of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. Mr. Robertson, aware of the difficulty of collecting camels in sufficient number for the purposes of the army,

ordered letters to be addressed to the principal collectors in Upper India, calling upon them to purchase as many ponies and mules as they could get together in their several districts. And it was in no small measure owing to these exertions that Pollock was at length enabled to advance.

† "It has given great satisfaction to the Governor-General to learn, from your letter of the 14th ult., that you have sufficient means of move-

On this same 4th of July the Governor-General wrote twice to General Nott—once through his secretary and once with his own hand. He sent the General a copy of his instructions to Pollock, impressing upon him that all his views were in favour of a prompt withdrawal; and he addressed to him a long inconclusive letter, instructing him to withdraw from Afghanistan, but telling him, at the same time, that the line of withdrawal was to be left to his own choice. He might retire by going backward, by Quettah and Sukkur, or he might retire by going forward, by Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad. But whichever line he might take, he was never to lose sight for a moment of the fact that Lord Ellenborough had decreed that he should retire, and that retire he must.*

It was fortunate for Lord Ellenborough and for the country that he had to deal at this time with men who thought more of the honour of Great Britain than of their own safety; and who did not shrink from responsibility, if, by incurring it, they had a reasonable chance

ment to be enabled to act on the suggestions contained in my letter of the 1st ultimo (June). You will not have mistaken the object of that letter, which was merely to suggest that, as far as your means of movement allowed, you should make your strength felt by the enemy during the period of your necessary detention in the valley of the Caubul river. No change has from the first taken place in the Governor-General's views of the expediency of withdrawing your army at the earliest period consistent with the health and efficiency of the troops, that is, as is now understood, in the beginning of October."—[*Mr. Maddock to General Pollock: July 4, 1842. Published Papers.*]

* "Nothing has occurred to induce me to change my first opinion,

that the measure, commanded by considerations of political and military prudence, is to bring back the armies now in Afghanistan at the earliest period at which their retirement can be effected consistently with the health and efficiency of the troops, into positions wherein they may have easy and certain communications with India; and to this extent the instructions you have received remain unaltered. But the improved position of your army, with sufficient means of carriage for as large a force as it is necessary to move in Afghanistan, induces me now to leave to your option the line by which you shall withdraw your troops from that country."—[*Mr. Maddock to General Nott: July 4, 1842. Published Papers.*]

of conferring great and lasting benefits upon the government which they served, and the nation which they represented. But Lord Ellenborough's instructions to the Generals were so worded—whether by accident or by design I do not presume to determine—as to cast upon them all the onus of failure, and to confer upon the Governor-General, or at least to divide with him, all the honour of success. One thing at least is certain, the letter of the 4th of July, addressed to General Nott, and signed by the Chief Secretary, ought not to have been written. It is either from first to last a masterpiece of Jesuitical cunning, or it indicates a feebleness of will—an infirmity of purpose—discreditable to the character of a statesman entrusted with the welfare and the honour of one of the greatest empires in the world.*

* It is right that the most important passages of this letter to General Nott should be here quoted. "But the improved position," wrote Lord Ellenborough, after cautioning him (see *ante*, page 557, note) against believing any change had come over the Governor-General's opinions "of your army, with sufficient means of carriage for as large as it is necessary to move in Afghanistan, induces me now to leave to your option the line by which you shall withdraw your troops to that country. I must desire, however, that in forming your decision upon this most important question, you will attend to the following considerations:—In the direction of Quettah and Sukkur there is no enemy to oppose you; at each place, occupied by detachments, you will find provisions, and probably as you descend the passes you will have increased means of carriage; the operation is one admitting of no doubt as to its success. If you determine upon moving upon Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad, you will require further transport of provisions—a much larger amount of carriage; and you will be practically without

communications from the time of your leaving Candahar. Dependent entirely upon the courage of your army, and upon your own ability in directing it, I should not have any doubt as to the success of the operations; but whether you will be able to obtain provisions for your troops during the whole month, and forage for your animals, may be a matter of reasonable doubt. Yet upon this your success will turn. You must remember that it was not the superior courage of the Afghans, but want and the inclemency of the season, which led to the destruction of the army at Caubul; and you would feel as I do, that the loss of another army, from whatever cause it might arise, might be fatal to our government in India. I do not undervalue the aid which our government in India would receive from the successful execution by your army of a march through Ghuznee and Caubul over the scene of our late disasters. I know all the effect it would have upon the minds of our soldiers, of our allies, of our enemies in Asia, and of our countrymen and all foreign nations in Europe. It is an object of just

But, whatever may have been the amount of responsibility cast upon the two Generals, neither Pollock nor Nott shrunk from it. They cheerfully took up the burden and placed it on their own shoulders.* They had obtained now all that they wanted. They had no doubt of the ability of their troops to carry everything before them. Cattle had been supplied, or were being supplied, sufficient for all their movements. It was only necessary that they should act in concert with each other—that they should so combine their operations as to reach the capital at the same time, and strike the last blow together. But it was no easy thing in those days to carry on a correspondence between Jellalabad and Cándahar; and it was long before Pollock received an answer to his letters. Five messengers were despatched in succession to Nott's camp;† but it was not before the middle of August that Pollock could assure himself of his brother-general's intentions to advance upon Caubul at all.‡

ambition which no one more than myself would rejoice to see effected; but I see that failure in the attempt is certain and irretrievable ruin; and I would endeavour to inspire you with the necessary caution, and make you feel that, great as are the objects to be attained by success, the risk is great also."—[*Lord Ellenborough to General Nott: July 4, 1842. Published Papers.*]

* "If I have not," wrote Pollock, "lived long enough to judge of the propriety of an act for which I alone am responsible, the sooner I resign the command as unfit the better. I assure you that I feel the full benefit of being unshackled and allowed to judge for myself."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† A letter, too, was sent by Captain Troup to Akbar Khan with a request that he would forward it to Nott.

A few harmless lines were written in ink; and much important matter in rice-water, to be brought out by the application of iodine. The employment of Akbar Khan himself, as the medium of communication between the two Generals, who were contemplating his destruction, is not one of the least amusing incidents of the war.

‡ Pollock was afraid that Nott would have commenced his retreat before the receipt of the despatch of July 4. "My movement will of course depend," he wrote in a confidential letter to Mr. Robertson on the 10th of August, "on General Nott's ability to meet me. Our late accounts from that quarter are not favorable. They say that General Nott is bent on retiring, and I very much fear that he will have made several marches to the rear before

In the mean while, neither General had been wholly inactive. At Jellalabad, Pollock had been making a demonstration against some hostile tribes, and carrying on negotiations for the release of the British prisoners. The Governor-General had several times, in rather obscure language, suggested to Pollock that it might be desirable to strike a blow at some one somewhere in the neighbourhood of Jellalabad; and now the General sent out Monteith into the Shinwarree valley to read a lesson to the tribes who had possessed themselves of the property plundered from our army, and who held in their hands one of our captured guns. These things were to be now demanded from the tribes, or to be wrested from them at the point of the bayonet. In the middle of June, Monteith descended into the valley, with a brigade of European and Native troops, and a sufficiency of guns for his purpose. The troops, so long held in restraint, were now all fire and impetuosity. The first sight, in the village of Ali-Boghan, of some property that had belonged to our slaughtered army, maddened them past control.* They began at once to fire the houses and to plunder the inhabitants. But Monteith and Macgregor interfered for their protection. The plundered property

the government despatch can reach him. . . . I ought by this time to have heard from General Nott, in reply to my letter by the first of the five messengers. If he is not coming on, my negotiations for the prisoners will be a very simple affair; but it must ever be a subject of regret that he should so hastily retire, and at such a time, while he commands an army in every respect efficient, and amounting to about 15,000 men."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

* It was reported in camp, and subsequently set forth in the local jour-

nals, that some women had been violated by our soldiery. "But," says Captain Macgregor, "I made the strictest inquiry into the matter, both from the Afghan chiefs who were with me, and from the inhabitants of the village, but could not trace in the slightest degree any just foundation for the report in question. Had there been any, it would doubtless have formed a subject of great grievance to the people, who are so very jealous of the honour of their women."—[*Captain Macgregor's Report on the Operations in the Shinwarree districts. MS. Records.*]

was restored. Even the money that had been taken was made over again to the inhabitants.

The report of the violence that had been committed at Ali-Boghan spread like wild-fire through the valley. The people believed that the British troops were about to fire all the villages; so they began at once to remove their property, and to fly in every direction from their homes. Macgregor exerted himself to restore confidence among them, by explaining the real designs of his government; and the people began to return to their dwellings. But, although indiscriminate plunder and destruction were not the objects of the expedition, the brigade had been sent out to do certain work, and it soon became evident that it could not be done without inflicting some injury upon the people. The captured gun and the plundered property were to be recovered. It was known that two of the principal chiefs of a place called Goolai were in possession of a portion of the treasure that had fallen into the hands of our enemies. It was known, too, that the captured gun was at Deh-Surruk. It was determined, therefore, that the brigade should move against these two places.

On the morning of the 20th of June, Monteith moved upon Goolai. "It presented all the appearance of a flourishing little settlement. Several of the forts were extensive and in good repair. They were shaded by clusters of mulberry and willow trees. Flowing water passed close to the forts, and served to irrigate the neighbouring fields of cotton, rice, and jewaree. The summer harvest had just been collected, and was stocked outside the fort in its unwinnowed state. The inhabitants had evidently only time to escape with their portable property before the troops reached Goolai. In fact, our visit was most timely. Three or four days'

delay would have enabled them to carry off their grain.*

Monteith pitched his camp on some rising ground near the village, and demanded the restitution of the plundered treasure. On the following day evasive answers were received; there was no prospect of obtaining, by peaceful negotiation, the concession that was demanded from the chiefs. So the work of destruction commenced. Their forts and houses were destroyed. Their walls were blown up. Their beautiful trees were ringed and left to perish.† The retribution was complete.

The work of destruction went on for some days. In the mean while the captured gun had been given up,

* *Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.*

† There was no need to cut them down. It was sufficient to cut deep rings through the bark to the heart of the tree; for they seldom survived the operation. There is something in this so repugnant to our civilised and Christian ideas of righteous retribution, that it is only just that I should give in this place the explanation of an act, perpetrated, indeed, upon other occasions, in the words of an officer equally gallant and humane. "All the injury," said Captain Macgregor, "that we could do to their forts and houses could, with facility, in a short time be repaired by them. From their proximity to the hills, they could always obtain timber in abundance; and where water is plentiful they could rebuild easily the bastions we might blow up; and therefore a greater degree of punishment than this seemed to be necessary, and was completely within our power, if we destroyed their trees—a measure which seems barbarous to a civilised mind; but in no other way can the Afghans be made to feel equally the weight of our power, for they delight

in the shade of their trees. They are to be seen under them in groups, during the summer, all day long, talking, reading, weaving, and sleeping. Even women and children seek the shade of their trees. The Afghan mountaineer is not tangible to us in any other way. He removes his herds, flocks, and property to the hills on the shortest notice; and flies before our troops to places where he is inaccessible to them. The Goolai people, moreover, were deserving of no mercy. The amount of treasure they had plundered (viz., 18,000 or 20,000 rupees) was considerable. They had been very pertinacious in attacking Captain Ferris' cantonment; and equally so, subsequently, our troops at Jellalabad. Therefore the Brigadier determined at once to commence the work of destruction, desired that neither fort, house, tree, grain, nor *boosa* should be spared to them. This assuredly was the best plan for preventing the necessity of harsh measures in future. Working parties from the brigade were accordingly appointed for this purpose."—*[Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.]*

and the people of Deh-Surruk were willing to restore the treasure which they had taken; but could not easily recover it from the real possessors. However, after some difficulty, upwards of 10,000 rupees, besides other property, were recovered from the Shinwarrees. A large quantity of grain, timber, boosa, and other requisites was appropriated at Goolai; and it was supposed that the declared objects of the expedition had now been fully accomplished.

But the Shinwarrees had not been thoroughly coerced. They had always been a refractory people—unwilling to pay revenue either to Barukzye chief or Suddozye Prince. It was thought advisable, therefore, to read them a lesson. So Monteith made a progress through the valley, applied the fire-brand to their forts, and shot them down in their places of refuge. “At one time the interiors of five-and-thirty forts were in a blaze along the valley.”* At a place named Mazeena the tribes made some show of resistance; but the steady gallantry of her Majesty’s 31st Regiment and of their Sepoy comrades was not to be withstood; the shells from Abbot’s howitzers were irresistible; and so Monteith effectually beat down the opposition of the Shinwarrees. This was on the 26th of July. On the 3rd of August the brigade returned to Jellalabad. From the 17th of June to this date, “both men and cattle had entirely subsisted on the resources of the country.” “The cattle especially,” added Captain Macgregor, concluding his report, “will be found to have greatly improved in condition while employed on this service. Indeed, in whatever way it may be viewed, it will be found that the expedition has been highly beneficial to British interests.”

Whilst Monteith was carrying on these operations in

* *Report of Brigadier Monteith: July 27, 1842. Published Papers.*

the Shinwarree valley, Pollock was carrying on negotiations for the release of the British prisoners. On the 10th of July, Captain Troup, accompanied by a native gentleman, named Hadjee Buktear, had been despatched to General Pollock's camp; but had brought back no satisfactory intelligence to encourage and animate the Sirdar.* The fact is, that Pollock had by this time begun to see his way to Caubul. Lord Ellenborough and Mr. Robertson had exerted themselves most successfully to supply him with carriage. He was eager to plant the British standard on the Balla Hissar, and was unwilling to hamper himself with any negotiations which might impede or delay his advance. It was thought by some in Pollock's camp that the Sirdar was not sincere in his overtures, and that his real object was to gain time. But Pollock was equally anxious to gain time. The emissaries were not dismissed in a hurry; and when they returned at last to Caubul they carried back only a verbal message, and that message contained a demand for all the guns and trophies in the possession of the enemy.† It was expected that another reference would be made to Jellalabad; and that in the mean

* "It is impossible," wrote General Pollock, "to guess how this mission may succeed, because, in dealing with Afghans, you deal with treachery and deceit; but appearances are as fair as they can be for the release of the prisoners. Captain Troup says that if it had depended on Mahomed Akbar alone, some of the ladies would have been sent with him; but Mahomed Shah appears to be a bitter enemy of ours—much more so than I had reason to suppose. The man who has come with Captain Troup was selected in opposition to the wish of Mahomed Akbar, who wished to send Dost Mahomed Khan, a brother of Mahomed Shah. Dost Mahomed was objected to by the chiefs as being

too bigoted to his own party, whereas Hadjee Buktear Khan was considered neutral. He is a Candahar man—has been at Bombay and others of our settlements, and is better acquainted with the European character than the other."—[*Jellalabad, July 15. MS. Correspondence.*]

† "Captain Troup," wrote General Pollock, "is still here. I am glad that, in proposing terms, I insisted on having the guns, for I think there is almost a certainty of an objection being made to that, in which case, of course, I can back out. . . . On this occasion I have written nothing."—[*Jellalabad, July 18. MS. Correspondence.*]

while Pollock would be supplied with the means of rescuing the prisoners more majestically than by such negotiations. He had received so many assurances from influential men at the capital that the Caubullees would not suffer Akbar Khan to carry off the prisoners to Toorkistan, that he believed the advance of his army would tend more surely to their release than any diplomatic measure which he could possibly adopt.

But Akbar Khan held a different opinion. When Troup returned to Caubul, the Sirdar summoned him and Pottinger to an interview, declared that he was not satisfied with Pollock's verbal message, and candidly asked their advice. Pottinger replied, that the best advice he could offer was, that Akbar Khan should immediately send down the whole of the prisoners to Pollock's camp at Jellalabad, as a proof of his sincerity and good feeling. If there were any delay, he added, the negotiations would be broken off, and the army would advance. To this the Sirdar replied, that without a written promise from General Pollock to withdraw his troops from Afghanistan the prisoners would not be sent to his camp; and that they might at once banish the thought of a forcible release of the prisoners on the advance of the British army, for that as soon as intelligence should reach him of our troops having arrived at Charbagh, he would send them all off to Toorkistan—scattering them about by twos and threes among the different chiefs—and come down himself with his fighting men to dispute the progress of the advancing army.

To Pollock, this appeared a mere idle threat. He still clung to the belief that there was a party in Caubul able and willing* to prevent the departure of the pri-

* "I have reason to believe that which has determined not to allow there is a strong party at Caubul the removal of our prisoners; and I

soners; and when Troup, accompanied by Lawrence, came down again to Jellalabad, he found the General still less inclined than before to promise to withdraw his army. He had, indeed, already moved a brigade forward to Futtehabad—two marches in advance of his old position; and all that he could now promise was, that he would not advance beyond that point before the expiration of a certain number of days.* The negotiations had, by this time, become the merest sham. It was obvious that Pollock could not proceed with them to a successful issue without encumbering himself with conditions which would have hung as a mill-stone round the neck of a military commander, eager to drive his battalions into the heart of the enemy's country. The Governor-General wrote to him that "all military operations must proceed, as if no negotiations were on foot;" but Akbar Khan had rendered this impossible, by demanding, as a condition of the delivery of the prisoners, that all the British troops should withdraw from Afghanistan.†

also believe that the Wullee of Kooloom has written refusing to receive Mahomed Akbar if accompanied by the prisoners."—[*General Pollock to Government.*]

* "I don't know how my last message will be received at Caubul. Mahomed Akbar will be annoyed. My address is to Futteh Jung; and since I have sent the reply I have moved up the brigade. I told Captain Troup that I should not move up the brigade beyond Futtehabad for a certain number of days, in the expectation of hearing further from Caubul, and that I expect the ladies will be sent. The negotiation is carried on in the name of Futteh Jung, but Akbar Khan is the main-spring. The chief, and almost the only point he seemed to care about was, that I should sign a declaration that I would leave the country

directly the prisoners arrived. To this I objected. I was then requested to state any date—but this I also declined."—[*General Pollock to Mr. Robertson: August 10, 1842. MS. Correspondence.*] Sale commanded the advanced brigade at Futtehabad. "I have my camp in two lines," he wrote a few days afterwards to Pollock, "the cavalry facing the river, and rear to the water—the front of our encampment an open stony plain—a good place for a fight. The left of our line rests on a small hill that commands a view all round."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† The Governor-General, however, seems to have considered it not wholly improbable that the contemplated military movement upon Caubul would be suspended by the favorable conclusion of the negotiations with the enemy; and actually

Weary of these protracted negotiations, Pollock was now eager to advance upon Caubul. He was only waiting the arrival of specific information from Candahar relative to the movements of his brother-general. "As I have offered to meet him," he wrote to a friend in high place, "he will find some difficulty in resisting the *glorious* temptation; but if he does resist, he is not the man I take him for."* The glorious temptation was not resisted. The two Generals were worthy of each other. Nott had determined to retire to India by Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad; and in the middle of the month of August, a messenger, long expected and most welcome, brought the cheering intelligence into Pollock's camp.†

On the 20th of August, Pollock began to move from Jellalabad. On that day the advanced guard under the General himself reached Sultanpore, on its way to Gundamuck. At the latter place he intended to assemble the whole of the troops which he had selected to accompany him to the capital‡—in all, about 8000

authorised Pollock to exercise his discretion in ordering Nott to retire by Quettah, even though the march upon Ghuznee and Caubul had been commenced.—[*Lord Ellenborough to General Pollock: July 29, 1842.*] Subsequently the Governor-General seemed to awaken to a sense of the extraordinary character of this suggestion, for he wrote to General Pollock to say that he "could hardly imagine the existence of circumstances which could justify the diversion of Major-General Nott's army from the route of Ghuznee and of Caubul, when his intention of marching by that route shall have been once clearly indicated."—[*Lord Ellenborough to General Pollock: August 26, 1842.*]

* *MS. Correspondence.*

† Nott's letter was despatched on

the 27th of July. It comprised but a few lines:—

"Candahar, July 27, 1842.

"My DEAR GENERAL,—You will have received a copy of a letter from the Governor-General under date the 4th instant, to my address, giving me the option of retiring a part of my force to India *via* Caubul and Jellalabad. I have determined to take that route, and will write to you fully on the subject as soon as I have arranged for carriage and supplies.—Yours truly, W. NOTT."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

‡ The force consisted of the 3rd Dragoons; the 1st Native Cavalry; a squadron of the 5th and of the 10th ditto, with the head-quarters; 600 Sowars of the 3rd Irregular Cavalry; her Majesty's 31st Regiment; the 33rd Regiment of Native

men. On the 23rd, Pollock, with the advance, reached Gundamuck. About two miles from that place lies the village of Mammoo Khail. Two hostile chiefs with a strong body of the Ooloos were occupying this position.* Pollock at once determined to dislodge them; and ordered up from Sale's camp in the rear Broadfoot's sappers and a squadron of dragoons. On the following morning the brigade advanced, and the enemy began to retire. Then, dividing his infantry into two columns, with a wing of her Majesty's 9th Foot at the head of each, Pollock entered the village. The enemy had abandoned their positions there, and at another village, called Koochlee Khail; but they rallied and returned to occupy a range of heights within musket-shot of the latter place, and from these commanding eminences they kept up, for some time, a hot fire from their jezails. But Colonel Taylor attacked them on one side; Broadfoot, with his sappers, on the other.† The heights were carried. The forts and villages were taken, and the enemy dispersed. The chiefs fled to Caubul with a few followers. Mammoo Khail and Koochlee Khail

Infantry; the whole of Sir Robert Sale's and of Colonel Tulloch's brigades; with seventeen guns, a company of Sappers and Miners, and a regiment of Bildars (Pioneers) under Mr. Mackeson. A small force was left (chiefly for want of carriage) at Gundamuck, and the rest remained in garrison at Jellalabad.

* The enemy had been collecting there for some days; and Sale, who was encamped at Futtehabad, received intelligence of their movements, which he forwarded to the General. "I desired Broadfoot," he wrote, "to send in a man to Shakespear, who said he had come from Mammoo Khail, and that the Urzbegee was collecting fighting men, and sending away their women and children."—[*General Sale to General*

Pollock: August 14, 1842. MS.]

"From what I can learn, the Kograncees are assembling and are preventing supplies from being brought into our camp. Mammoo Khail appears to be their head-quarters. If allowed to remain unmolested, they may become troublesome. If it suited your views to move forward to Gundamuck, we should then, I think, command the resources of the valley."—[*General Sale to General Pollock: August 16, 1842. MS.*]

† In this affair we lost seven men killed, and about fifty wounded. Among the latter were four officers, Major Huish (26th Native Infantry), Captain Edwards (9th Foot), Captain Tait (Irregular Cavalry), Ensign Robertson (37th Native Infantry).

were destroyed by fire; and the fruit-trees were cut down.*

Having accomplished this, Pollock returned to Gundamuck. The attack on Mammoo Khail, which is not on the road to Caubul, was a diversion rendered necessary by the appearance of the enemy in that direction. But the General had yet to assemble his entire force, to assure himself of the sufficiency of his supplies, and to make all the necessary arrangements for his advance upon the capital. The delight with which the announcement of the intended advance upon Caubul had been received throughout the general camp is not to be described. The question of advance or withdrawal had been for months eagerly discussed. Every symptom had been watched with the closest interest—every report had been canvassed with wondering curiosity. Acting under instructions from the Supreme Government, Pollock had kept all his intended movements a close secret. It was not, indeed, until the middle of August that even Sir Robert Sale knew that the force would advance upon Caubul; and then he was so wild with excitement that he could scarcely write a note to the General to express his unbounded delight.†

* With regard to the destruction committed at Mammoo Khail, it is right that General Pollock's own account should be given. "At Mammoo Khail, I know most positively that no Afghan was killed except in fair fighting. The families had, I believe, gone the day before the place was taken. I cannot say when, or by whom, the adjoining houses were set fire to. I passed through with the right column in pursuit of the enemy, and did not return till the afternoon, when I had determined to encamp there. On my return I found Brigadier Tulloch with his column (the left) occupying the gardens. The fort and adjacent houses were still burning. On the

return of the whole of the troops, it was necessary, for their security, to take advantage of the gardens surrounded by walls, and the men were accordingly encamped there. The destruction of the vines was a necessary consequence, as any one must know who has seen how grapes were cultivated in Afghanistan. There were very few trees cut down, but the bark of a number of them was taken for about two or three inches." —[*General Pollock to the Adjutant-General: Dinapore, April 18, 1843. MS. Records.*] See *Appendix* at the end of the volume for the letter entire.

† "Hurrah!" he wrote; "this is good news. All here are prepared to

There were now no longer any doubts regarding the forward movement of the force. Officers and men were eager to push on to Caubul; and willing to advance lightly equipped, leaving behind them all the baggage that was not absolutely necessary to their efficiency. The 13th Light Infantry, ever ready to set an example to their comrades, sent back a considerable portion of their baggage to Jellalabad, and prepared to march with only a single change of linen. The officers of the regiment were content to congregate, three or four together, in small hill tents; and Broadfoot, at all times a pattern of chivalrous zeal, offered to take on his sappers without any tents at all.*

Full of hope and courage the troops moved up, by brigades, to Gundamuck. Making all his arrangements for the march, and waiting intelligence from Nott,† Pollock remained at that place until the 7th of September. Supplies were pouring freely into camp. The rich orchards and fruit-gardens of the surrounding country yielded their luscious produce; and our officers were writing to their friends that they were "luxuriating quietly on the most delicious fruits and supplies of all kind." The neighbouring chiefs were coming in and making submission to the English General. It was plain that already the tidings of our advance were striking terror into the hearts of the chiefs and people of Afghanistan.

meet your wishes to march as light as possible. I take no carriage from the Commissariat; and our officers are doubling up *four* in a small hill tent, and are sending all to the rear that they can dispense with. . . . *I am so excited that I can scarce write.*" —[General Sale to General Pollock: Futehabad, August 16, 1842. *MS. Correspondence.*]

* General Sale to General Pollock: Aug. 18, 1842. *MS. Correspondence.*

† Pollock had received no later intelligence from Nott's camp than that contained in the brief letter of July 27, though he had despatched ten messengers to the westward. It was not until midnight of the 6th—7th of September that letters from Nott's camp were received by Pollock at Gundamuck.

It was on the 1st day of September, when Pollock was awaiting at Gundamuck the assembling of his brigades, that an Afghan, of forlorn aspect, in soiled and tattered clothes, rode upon a wretched pony, attended by three followers, into the British camp. Two officers of the general staff, Burn and Mayne, met the stranger as he approached, and recognised him. They knew him to be Futteh Jung. They knew him to be the man who, a day or two before, had borne the title of King of Caubul. The fugitive was kindly received and conducted to the General's tent. A salute was fired in his honour. Accommodation was provided for him in the British camp, and everything that could conduce to his comfort was freely granted to the unfortunate Prince.

For some time, Futteh Jung had been a wretched puppet at the Caubul Court. He had been but a King of straw. The merest shadow of royalty had been suffered to cling to him. Akbar Khan, for his own uses, held the imbecile Prince firmly in his hands; and every day tightened his grasp. He stripped him of all his power; he stripped him of all his wealth. He threatened—he overawed him. He compelled him to attach his seal, or his signature,* to papers resigning all authority into the hands of the Wuzeer, and signifying his assent to everything that might be originated or sanctioned by him.† Deeming that the unscrupulous

* To many of his letters to General Pollock, Futteh Jung signed his name in English characters.

† Akbar Khan compelled the Prince to write to Pollock: "I have given to Sirdar Mahomed Akbar the full and entire management of all my property and affairs of every description, and have resigned to him in perpetuity full power to judge and settle all questions on all points. Whatever arrangement he may make with the English Government I agree

to confirm, and no alteration shall be made." And again: "The arrangements which have been made with Captain Troup and Hadjee Buktear have been all approved of by me. I have delegated all powers over my country and wealth to the Wuzeer, Mahomed Akbar Khan, Barukzye!" But the Prince took the first opportunity to write privately to the General: "My friend, it will have been evident to you that in this matter I have been compelled to act thus. I

tyranny of Akbar Khan would soon manifest itself in the murder of the whole royal family, the Prince directed his thoughts towards the expediency of flight, and determined to claim the hospitality of the British General. But Akbar Khan suspected his intentions, and flung him into close confinement in the Balla His-sar. Cutting a hole through the roof of his prison, he effected his escape, and fled to the quarters of the Kuz-zilbashs, where he remained for some days concealed. It was reported that he had been murdered. But he was now fixed in his resolution to seek the protection of the British Government; and was soon upon his way to Jellalabad. With some difficulty, often fired upon as he went, he made his way through the passes; and at last, on the 1st of September, rode into Pollock's camp.

On the morning of the 7th of September, General Pollock, with the first division of his army, under the immediate command of Sir Robert Sale, moved from Gundamuck,* in progress to the capital. The second division, under General M'Caskill, marched on the fol-

did not even know that Captain Troup and Hadjee Buktear had been sent, and I had not the slightest knowledge of the proposals made by them. Captain Troup is well aware of this, since we had never met, nor had any of my confidential people been employed between us."—[*Futteh Jung to General Pollock: Translation. July 21, 1842. MS. Records.*] The letter was evidently written in a state of painful alarm. It concludes with the words: "You must be very careful not to let it be known that I have written to you; since, should these villains hear of it, they would put me and my family to death." In reply to this letter Pollock expressed his surprise that, "notwithstanding his Majesty's friendship, the good-will of the chiefs, and the unanimity of the people at Caubul, still they cannot

prevent the treachery of one man from causing dissension between the two governments, and that they are unable to show their good-will to us by releasing our prisoners." To this, on the 1st of August, Futteh Jung replied: "You express surprise at my many well-wishers not being able to find a remedy for one evil-disposed person. You write: 'If this could be effected, a great object would be obtained.' Eminent in rank! You write truly. But in a religious war, a father cannot trust his son—a son, his father."

* A squadron of the 5th Light Cavalry; a squadron, and the headquarters of the 10th Light Cavalry; the left wings of the 33rd and 60th N.I., with two guns of the 3rd troop 2nd brigade of Horse Artillery, were left at Gundamuck.

lowing day. A party of the Sikh contingent, under Captain Lawrence, accompanied this division. The regiments had been sent up to Jellalabad in June, and had been encamped on the opposite side of the river. They were the old Mussulman corps who had behaved so infamously on the other side of the Khybur, but who now had been talked over by Gholab Singh into something like propriety of demeanour.* They behaved at least as well as the British General expected, and when Lawrence sought permission for a party of 500 men, horse and foot, to accompany, under his directions, Pollock's army to Caubul, the General was but little inclined to refuse the request. So a party of 300 horse and 200 foot marched, under Lawrence, with Mc'Caskill's division; and the remainder occupied positions at Neemlah and Gundamuck.

On the 8th of September, as the first division of Pollock's army approached the hills which commanded the road through the Jugdulluck Pass, he found that their summits were occupied by the enemy. Large bodies of Ghilzyes, under different chieftains, each with a distinguishing standard, were clustering on the heights. "The hills they occupied formed an amphitheatre inclining towards the left of the road, on which the troops were halted whilst the guns opened, and the enemy were thus enabled on this point to fire into the column, a deep ravine preventing any contact with them."† The practice of the guns was excellent; but the Ghilzye warriors stood their ground. The shells from our howitzers burst amongst them; but still they held their posts. Still they poured in a hot fire from their jezails.

* They, however, diverted themselves with a little internal mutiny—rising up against the Sikh general, Gholab Singh Povindea, and burning

his tent. The poor old man, in an extremity of terror, sought refuge under Pollock's skirts.

† *General Pollock's Report.*

So Pollock sent his infantry to the attack; and gallantly they ascended the heights. On one side, Broadfoot, ever in advance, led up his little band of sappers. On the other, Taylor, with the 9th Foot, ascended the hills, where the enemy, horse and foot, were posted behind a ruined fort. In the centre, Wilkinson, with the 13th, pushed up the ascent towards the key of the enemy's position. All went forward with impetuous gallantry; and as they clomb the hill-sides and seized the Ghilzye standards, up went an animated and enthusiastic cheer from the British stormers. It was plain that their heart was in the work, and that nothing could turn them back. The flower of the Ghilzye tribes were there, under many of their most renowned chieftains, and they looked down upon the scene of their recent sanguinary triumphs. But they had now to deal with other men, under other leaders. The loud clear cry of the British infantry struck a panic into their souls. They turned and fled before our bayonets. Then galloped Lockyer with his dragoons after the enemy's horse; but the nature of the ground was against him, and they escaped the annihilation which otherwise would have been their fate.

But the battle was not yet over. A considerable body of the enemy had betaken themselves for safety to an apparently inaccessible height. On the summit of a mountain they planted their standards, and seemed to look down with defiance upon our troops. But Pollock was resolute not to leave, on that day, his work incomplete. He believed that where the enemy could post themselves his infantry could attack them. So, under cover of Abbot's and Backhouse's guns, Broadfoot and Wilkinson again led up their men, and stormed that precipitous height. "Seldom have soldiers had a more

arduous task to perform, and never was an undertaking of the kind surpassed in execution."* The Ghilzyes looked down upon them with astonishment and dismay. They saw at once the temper of our men, and they shrunk from the encounter. Our stormers pushed on, and the Ghilzye standards were lowered. The enemy fled in confusion; and left the stronghold, from which they had looked down in the insolence of mistaken security, to be occupied by British troops.

The victory was complete. It was mainly achieved, under Pollock's able directions, by the brave men of the old Jellalabad garrison. Sale himself, who was never far off when there was likely to be hard fighting, led up the heights in front of his old regiment, and was wounded in the affray. The loss upon our side was trifling. Nothing could have told more plainly than such a victory as this how little formidable in reality were the best Ghilzye fighting men in their most inaccessible strongholds, when opposed to British infantry under the eye of a capable commander. The Ghilzye butchers were now seen flying like sheep before the comrades of the men whom a few months before they had slaughtered in these very shambles at Jugdulluck.

The first division alone of Pollock's army was engaged with the enemy at Jugdulluck.† The second division passed on, much molested by the enemy, and often compelled to fight its way against large bodies of Ghilzye footmen. On the 11th of September they joined the advance in the neighbourhood of Tezeen. The exertions of a forced march had fatigued M'Caskill's cattle; so Pollock determined to devote the 12th to a halt. Before the day had closed it was evident that

* *General Pollock's Report.*

† For an account of the operations of the second division of Pollock's army, see Lieutenant Greenwood's

"Narrative of the late Victorious Campaign in Afghanistan, under General Pollock."

the enemy were close at hand, and that we were on the eve of a great struggle. Akbar Khan had been true to his word. He had despatched the bulk of the English prisoners to the Hindoo-Koosh, and was now preparing to meet our army. On the 6th of September he had moved his camp to Begramee—distant some six miles from the Balla Hissar—and there sent for Captain Troup.* The English officer repaired to the camp of the Sirdar, who summoned a meeting of the principal chiefs. The Newab Zemaun Khan, Jubbar Khan, Amcen-oollah Khan, Mahomed Shah Khan, and other chief people of the empire attended the council. Troup was not permitted to be present at the conference; but he soon learnt its result. He was required immediately to proceed to Gundamuck on a mission to Pollock's camp. The chiefs had determined to endeavour to conciliate the British General. They were willing to agree to any terms he might please to dictate, if he would only consent to stay the advance of his army upon the capital.

Troup declared his willingness to proceed on the mission. But he had no hope, he said, of its success. The time for negotiation had passed. Nothing could now stay the progress of Pollock's army but the entire destruction of the force. But so urgently did the Sirdar press his request on the British officer, that Troup could not refuse his assent to the proposal. He made his preparations for the journey, and then returned to the Afghan camp. There, in the presence of Akbar Khan and Mahomed Shah Khan, he again set forth the use-

* Captains Troup and Bygrave, when the other prisoners were sent to Bameean, had been taken by Akbar Khan to the Balla Hissar—but had subsequently been permitted to remove themselves to Ali Mahomed's

force, where Captain and Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Trevor, with their children, had been left, on account of sickness, under charge of Dr. Campbell.

lessness of the mission, and prevailed with them to forego it.*

There was nothing now left for the Sirdar but to appeal to the God of battles, and bring all the force that he could muster to oppose the progress of Pollock's army through the passes. He now moved down to Boodkhak, and from that place summoned Troup and Bygrave to his camp. It appeared to him that the English officers might render him essential service in the negotiation of terms, if the tide of victory turned against him. On the morning of the 11th they entered his camp at Boodkhak. That evening he summoned them to his presence, and was for some time in earnest consultation with them. He declared that he had no wish to oppose the progress of the British army, but that he had, compromised himself too far to recede, and that the people would not hear of submission. The English officers assured him that his defeat was certain; and that opposition to our advance would only occasion an useless expenditure of life. "I know," said the Sirdar, "that I have everything to lose; but it is too late to recede." He declared that he was indifferent as to the result. The issue of the contest was in the hands of God, and it little mattered to him who was the victor.

On the following morning he sent for Troup, and announced that he and Bygrave must accompany him to Koord-Caubul. Arrived at that place, intelligence of the intended halt of Pollock's army at Tezeen reached the Sirdar. The Afghan chiefs had intended to make their last decisive stand at Koord-Caubul; but the halt of the advancing army seemed to indicate indecision,

* They required Troup, however, to write a letter to General Pollock making known Akbar Khan's wishes, and inclosing one from the Sirdar himself. The letters were sent, but the messengers returned some days afterwards, declaring that they had not been able to penetrate the British camp.—[*Captain Troup to General Pollock. MS. Correspondence.*]

and it was rumoured that difficulties had arisen to obstruct the progress of the force. On this, he at once determined to move on to Tezeen; and sent to Troup to announce his intentions.* The English officer sought and obtained permission to return to Ali Mahomed's fort; and Akbar Khan went forward to do battle with the British.†

On the 13th the two forces met. Great were the advantages of the ground to the Afghan levies. The valley of Tezeen is commanded on all sides by lofty hills; and the chiefs had posted their jezailchees on every available height. Indeed, on that morning of the 13th of September, Pollock's camp was encircled by the enemy; and it was plain that every effort had been made to turn the natural defences of the country to the best possible account. There was a hard day's work before Pollock's army; but never were a finer body of troops in finer condition, or more eager for the work before them. All arms had now a chance of distinguishing themselves—the cavalry on the plain, the infantry on the hills, and the artillery everywhere. Fortunately the enemy's horse entered the valley, attracted by the hope of plundering our baggage. The opportunity so eagerly desired by the dragoons was now at hand. The British squadrons were let loose upon the Afghan horsemen. The Native cavalry followed. There was a brilliant and successful charge. The enemy turned and fled; but the sabres of the dragoons fell heavily upon them; and many were cut up in the flight.

The infantry were not less successful. Gallantly they ascended the heights on either side of the pass, and

* Bygrave had before gone on to Tezeen with Sir-Bolund Khan. *lock. MS. Correspondence. See Appendix.*

† Captain Troup to General Pol-

gallantly the Afghans advanced to meet them. The stormers of the 13th Light Infantry clomb the hills on the right; the 9th and 31st on the left; and as they went, hotly and thickly upon them poured the iron rain from the Afghan jezails. But never for a moment, beneath the terrible fire that greeted them, as they pushed up the hill-side, did these intrepid soldiers waver for a moment. They knew that their muskets were no match for the Afghan jezails. The enemy, indeed, seemed to deride them. So, having reached the hill-top, they fixed their bayonets, and charged with a loud hurrah. The cold steel took no denial. Down went the Afghan marksmen before the English bayonets; the foremost men stood to be pierced, and the rest, awed by the fall of their comrades, and the desperate resolution of the British troops, fled down the hill in confusion. The strength of the Afghan force was broken; but the work of our fighting men was not done. All through the day a desultory warfare was kept up along the ridges of these tremendous hills. The Afghans occupying the highest ground, fired down upon our infantry, hiding themselves when they could behind the rocks, and shrinking now from a closer contest. Never did British troops display a higher courage in action, or a more resolute perseverance. Nobly did the Native Sepoy vie with the European soldier; and nowhere was there a finer sight than where Broadfoot with his sappers clambered up the steepest ascents under the hottest fire, and drove before them the stalwart Afghans—giants beside the little Goorkhas who pressed so bravely upon them. Many gallant feats were done that day; and many an Afghan warrior died the hero's death on his native hills, cheered by the thought that he was winning Paradise by such martyrdom. Desperate was the effort to keep back the invaders from clearing the heights of the Huft-

Kotul; but the British troops, on that day, would have borne down even stouter opposition. The Huft-Kotul was mounted; and three cheers burst from the victors as they reached the summit of that stupendous ascent.

A more decisive victory was never gained. The Afghan chiefs had brought out their best fighting men against us. They had done their best to turn the difficulties of the country to good account against the strangers. Their people were at home in these tremendous defiles; whilst few of our troops had ever seen them—few were accustomed to the kind of warfare which now alone could avail. There was everything to stir into intense action all the energies of the Barukzye chief and his followers. They were fighting in defence of their hearths and altars; the very existence of the nation was at stake. It was the last hope of saving the capital from the grasp of an avenging army. But with everything to stimulate and everything to aid him, Akbar Khan could offer no effectual resistance to the advance of Pollock's retributory force. The Afghans were fairly beaten on their own ground, and in their own peculiar style of warfare. It has been often said that our troops were maddened by the sight of the skeletons of their fallen comrades, and that they were carried onward by the irrepressible energy of revenge. It is true, that all along the line of country, from Gundamuck to Koord-Caubul, there rose up before the eyes of our advancing countrymen hideous evidences of the great January massacre—enough to kindle the fiercest passions in the hearts of the meekest men. But I believe that, if no such ghastly spectacles had lain in the path of the advancing army, the forward feeling would have glowed as strongly in the breasts of every soldier of Pollock's force.

The struggle was now at an end. Akbar Khan saw that the game was up, and that it was useless to attempt

to bring together the scattered fragments of his routed army. Taking Captain Bygrave with him as the companion of his flight, he fled to the Ghorebund valley. The fighting men, who had opposed us at Tezeen, were now in disordered masses, hurrying homewards along their mountain paths, and seeking safety in places remote from the track of the avenging army, whilst Pollock marched onwards with his regiments in orderly array,* and on the 15th of September encamped on the Caubul race-course.†

* Nothing could have been better than the conduct of the troops throughout the whole of these operations. "I think no officer," wrote Pollock, in a private letter, on the 23rd of September, "could possibly have had finer regiments under his command than I have, and to them do I owe all my success, which, as far as I am able to judge, has been so far complete. I hope the Governor-General may think so, and I shall be satisfied." In this letter, the difficulties with which Pollock had to contend, from the scarcity of cattle, are thus detailed. "I have had," he wrote, "great difficulties to contend against even to the last, from the great want of carriage-cattle. At Gundamuck, after my first engagement with the enemy, I found myself so reduced in cattle, that, to enable me to take on only fourteen days' supplies, I was obliged to leave at that place two horse-artillery guns, two squadrons of cavalry, and two wings of Native infantry; and yet with all this, all the camp-followers, public and private, were compelled to carry eight days' supplies. The fighting men carried three. The 1st Cavalry carried eight days' supplies on their horses. The rest of the cavalry carried three or

four days'. In this way we were enabled to move. . . . The night before I left Gundamuck, I received an official letter and a survey report, setting forth that the whole of the camels of one regiment were un-serviceable, and that they could not get up even without their loads. This was rather provoking, for I have only three Native regiments with me. My answer was short. 'Tell the commanding officer, that if his regiment can't march, he will relieve the two wings ordered to remain behind, and who are willing to go forward on any terms.' The regiment marched, and I heard no more about their camels. After our last engagement with the enemy (it was a severe struggle) we had 160 killed and wounded; and again carriage was in requisition. The spare horses of the cavalry were had recourse to; and I lent my own riding-horse to one poor fellow."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

† It should have been mentioned, in the note ‡ to page 567, that during the advance of Pollock's army on Caubul, a detachment of troops was posted at Dakha (on the Peshawur side of Jellalabad) as well as at Gundamuck and Jellalabad.

CHAPTER II.

[May—September · 1842.]

The Advance from Candahar—The Relief of Kelat-i-Ghilzye—Reappearance of Aktur Khan—General Action with the Douranees—Surrender of Sufder Jung—The Evacuation of Candahar—Disaster near Mookoor—The Battle of Goaine—The Recapture of Ghuznee—Flight of Shumshoodeen Khan—Arrival at Caubul.

WHILST the force under General Pollock was fighting its way from Jellalabad to Caubul, and carrying everything before it, the Candahar division, under General Nott, was making a victorious march upon the same point along the countries to the westward.

But it is necessary that, before I trace its progress to the capital, the circumstances which preceded the evacuation of Candahar should be briefly narrated. It has been stated that, in obedience to the instructions contained in the government letters of the 19th of April, a brigade under Colonel Wymer had been despatched to Khelat-i-Ghilzye to rescue the garrison there beleaguered, and to destroy the defences of the place. On the 19th of May, Wymer's force left Candahar. It seems that the Ghilzyes had obtained information of the intended movement, and determined to anticipate the attempted relief by making a desperate, and, as they

believed, decisive assault upon the place. Accordingly they prepared a number of scaling ladders, practised escalading, and, in the dim twilight of early morning on the 21st of May, advanced in two heavy columns, each 2000 strong, to the attack. Ascending the mound where the slope was easiest, they placed their scaling ladders against the walls, and gallantly mounted to the assault. Three times they ascended to the crest of the works, and three times they were nobly repulsed by Craigie and his men. The heavy showers of grape and musket-shot which the garrison poured in upon them did not deter those desperate assailants—they went on again and again to the attack, and were bayoneted on the parapets. For more than an hour this desperate struggle lasted; and then the assailants, whose impetuous courage had been overmatched by the steady gallantry of Craigie's garrison, gave way and abandoned the assault. The failure was dearly purchased. More than a hundred dead bodies were found at the foot of the works; and it was computed that the entire loss of the enemy did not fall short of five hundred men. Not a man of the British garrison was killed.

Before sunset the Ghilzyes had dispersed. Colonel Wymer, when he reached Khelat-i-Ghilzye, had nothing to do but quietly to withdraw the garrison, and to destroy the works of the place. It was believed that the measure, as indicating the intentions of the British Government to withdraw from Afghanistan, would create considerable sensation throughout the country, and greatly embolden the enemy. But the Afghans seemed rather to wonder why we had not extricated the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzye before, and did not associate it with any ideas of the general policy to be pursued by the British.

But before Wymer had returned from the northward, the Dourances had again made trial of their strength

in the field, and had again been signally beaten. Aktur Khan, the Zemindawer chief, who throughout the preceding year had been keeping the western districts of Afghanistan in a state of continual turmoil, and who had more than once given battle to our troops, was now again in the field against us. He had, since his return from Herat, whither he had betaken himself for safety, watched the progress of events without openly committing himself, and had hitherto shown little disposition to link himself with the Douranee cause. Indeed, at the beginning of May he had made overtures to the British authorities, and offered, if they would confirm him in the government of Zemindawer, to attack the Douranee camp.* As the month advanced, his conduct became more and more mysterious.† He was in constant communication with the Douranee chiefs, and yet at the same time he was professing the strongest friendship for the British Government, and offering to break up the Douranee camp. But before the expiration of the month he threw off the mask, joined his brother-chiefs with a considerable body of fighting men, and

* "May 8.—I received letters from Aktur Khan, and from our people at Ghirisk. The former maintains his tone of friendliness, and promises to send away Sydul Khan from Zemindawer. He also offers to attack the Douranee camp, if we will let bygones be bygones, and confirm him in the government of Zemindawer. He evidently does not think it for his interests at present to join the almost desperate Douranee cause; but still I cannot believe that he would, for our sakes, commit himself openly with his brother-chiefs."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

† "Aktur Khan's proceedings have throughout, and indeed still wear an appearance of mystery. He has been, ever since his return from Herat, in

active communication with the Douranees, but he has at the same time been sending, without any solicitation on our part, repeated messages to us, professing friendship, and proposing to break up the Ghazee camp. He is known to be personally ambitious, and most disinclined, therefore, to act in subordination to the other Douranee chiefs. He has also an old grudge against Meerza Ahmed, and we have thus thought it possible that he might be sincere to us, his natural enemies, and false to the Douranees, his natural friends. After playing fast and loose for some two months, he has at length actually joined the Douranee camp."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal; May 23, 1842.*]

took the command of the van-guard of the Douranee force.

It was obvious now that we were on the eve of another conflict. The Ghazees moved down on the Urg-hundab, and made arrangements to concentrate their troops in the neighbourhood of Baba-Wullee. It seemed probable that they would be able to raise the neighbouring tribes against us; and bring into the field a body of 4000 or 5000 men. Weakened by the absence of Wymer's brigade, and remembering the danger to which the city had been exposed when he last moved out to attack the Douranee camp, Nott determined to halt the detachment which he was about to despatch to the Kojuck to bring up the carriage which had been assembled for the withdrawal of his force. The enemy had chosen their time wisely and well. They believed that, in the absence of some of his best regiments, and nearly the whole of his cavalry force, Nott would be little able to hold Candahar and to do battle with the Douranee force in the open field. So they neared the city; and on the 29th of May seemed to invite the contest.

Aktur Khan had drawn into his hands the chief control of the force. What were his designs, at this time, it is not easy to determine. On the 27th he had again made overtures to the British authorities, offering to seize Meerza Ahmed, and to do his best to dissolve the Douranee force. At all events, if he could not accomplish this, he would, he said, on the first attack of the British, draw off his own followers, and then, taking advantage of their discomfiture, fall on their rear and plunder their baggage. But these offers were thrown away upon Nott and Rawlinson. They had no faith in the man.

Early on the morning of the 29th of May the enemy began to appear in the neighbourhood of Candahar—

hovering about the cantonments, and carrying off our baggage-cattle. As the day advanced, their numbers increased; but it was still believed by the General that they were only reconnoitring our position, and that they would not then give battle to our troops. Under this impression, Colonel Stacy, with two regiments of infantry and four guns, had been sent out to sweep away the intruders. It happened that his movements deceived the enemy. Believing at one time that he was retreating, the Ghazees pushed forward and occupied some rocky heights to the west of our cantonments, from which they opened a distant fire on our line. These movements were seen from the city.* It was obvious that the enemy were determined to bring on an engagement. So Nott sent out the 41st Queen's and eight guns; and an hour after mid-day mounted his horse and rode out to take the command of his troops. Rawlinson went with him.

Covered by the fire of the guns, the light companies were now ordered to storm the heights. The work was done rapidly and well. Standing out in bold relief against the sky, the forms of our stormers were soon seen upon the ridge of the hills; and as the enemy were driven down, Chamberlaine's Horse swept round amongst them and cut them up with heavy slaughter. Rawlinson then took the Parsewan Horse to clear the hillocks, to the right, of the detached bodies of the enemy which still clung to them, and Tait, with his Horse, was sent to support him. The Parsewan Horse charged gallantly;

* "The view from the look-out in the city," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "was now very fine. The hillocks on the right were crowned with masses of horsemen, numbering apparently about 1500—a crowd of footmen occupied the rocky heights in front of our line and beyond, the

shoulder of the Peer-Pae-Mal hill was covered with human beings thick as a flight of locusts, bodies of horse continually debouching round the shoulder and pushing on to join their comrades on the right."—[Major Rawlinson's *MS. Journal*.]

but the ground was difficult, and the enemy fled towards the mouth of the Baba-Wullee Pass. Rawlinson pushed on in hot pursuit; but turning off to follow a party of the enemy's horse, who seemed to have missed the outlet, well-nigh cut down or captured Mahomed Atta himself, who was afterwards known to have been at the head of them.

The rout of the enemy was complete.* But the movements of our troops were too slow to turn it to good account. The Ghazees made for the Baba-Wullee Pass. They had barricaded this pass with stones, and they had thrown up a strong breast-work in another direction, intending them as defences to lie between the British position and their own. But now, instead of finding these works in their front, they found them in their rear. They had not intended that the battle should be fought so near to the walls of Candahar. It was their design to take up a position within these defences; but, emboldened by the stories of the scouts, who had reported that we were too weak to operate beyond the walls, they had determined to pitch their camp in the vicinity of the cantonment and to invest Candahar. Had our guns been pushed on with sufficient activity, the enemy would have found the barricade which they had erected for their defence a terrible obstruction on their retreat. But the

* Nott, in his public despatches, was always somewhat chary of his praise, but in his private letters he delighted to dwell upon the achievements of his Sepoy regiments. Writing to Hammersley about this affair of the 29th of May, he said: "You will hear enough of our affair of the 29th with the enemy. The troops behaved well, and I am really surprised that our loss was so trifling; but I have remarked that the Afghans fire high. Our Sepoys are noble fellows—1000 are fully equal to 5000 Afghans or more. A detail of the 1st Cavalry, under Chamberlaine, behaved very well indeed. The enemy

had 8000 men in position and 2000 in reserve. We had 1500 of all arms in the field. The enemy have broken up. I expect Wymer back in a day or two, when I will drive the rebels out of the Candahar district. How I should like to go to Caubul! It is wonderful that the people in Hindostan should be so panic-struck; and they seem to believe that our Sepoys cannot stand the Afghans. Now I am quite sure, and should like to try it to-morrow, that 5000 Bengal Sepoys would lick 25,000 Afghans."—*[General Nott to Lieut. Hammersley: June 2, 1842. MS. Correspondence.]*

greater number of them effected their escape; and Nott, contented with his victory, drew off his troops.*

On the following day Stacy went out with a brigade, and Rawlinson took the Parsewan Horse to the banks of the river. The enemy's horse had not wholly disappeared; and it was believed that they might again be drawn into another skirmish. But they were not inclined for more fighting. As our skirmishers advanced, they fell back and crossed the river. The chiefs held a council of war, and the day was spent in stormy debate. But when the shades of evening fell upon them, they had matured no plan of operations. They broke up without a decision. Again they met on the following day. One plan and then another was discussed. Some proposed that they should proceed to Caubul. Some that they should assemble in Zemindawer. Others recommended that they should hold their ground upon the Urghundab; but the greater number were of opinion that it would be more expedient to move off to the northern district, and there await the issue of events at the capital. Many of them sent into the British camp to ask for terms; and it was obvious that, although the suspicion of our approaching departure kept up considerable excitement throughout the country, the Dourances had now arrived at the inevitable conclusion that it was useless any longer to contend with us in the field.†

* It is said that the widow of Akrum Khan, who was executed at Candahar in the preceding autumn, was in the field, riding her husband's charger, and bearing a Ghazee standard. Lieutenant Rattray writes: "As the enemy drew near, a white object was observed in the centre of their front ranks, which seemed the rallying-point for the Ghazees, chiefs, moollahs, kettle-drums, and standard-bearers. This proved to be

no less a personage than the slaughtered widow of the heroic Akrum Khan. Throwing aside her timid nature with her 'Boorkha,' she had left the sacred privacy of the Zenana for the foremost rank in the battle-field, had bestrode her husband's charger, and with his standard in her hand had assembled the tribes."

† *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.* It appears that early in June the enemy's suspicions of our intended

In the mean while, Prince Sufder Jung was waiting a favorable opportunity to cast himself upon the mercy of his enemies. On the day after the action of the 29th of May, he had received a letter from his brother, Futteh Jung, at Caubul, urging him to throw himself upon the protection of the British; and the young Prince, weary of the peril-laden life he had been leading, and seeing clearly the hopelessness of the cause to which he had attached himself, determined to follow the advice of his brother. So, on the following day, he despatched a messenger with a note to Rawlinson, informing him that he was on the point of mounting his horse to ride into the British camp. But before the British officer's answer reached him, Meerza Ahmed and the chiefs discovered his intentions, and carried him off with them across the river. His resolution, however, was not to be shaken. The chiefs made him a close prisoner, and openly denounced him as a traitor. But he continued to make overtures to Rawlinson, and at last effected his escape. On the 18th of June a letter was brought into the British camp, announcing that he had forsaken the Douranees, and had made a night-journey to Baba-Wullee. Rawlinson reported the circumstance to Nott, and the General consented to receive the submission of the boy.* So, on

withdrawal were confirmed in a curious manner, and that they seemed then to think of terms. Rawlinson says: "It appears that when the entire party of the Dourance chiefs were on the point of dissolution, a Hindostanee deserter joined the camp from the town, saying that he and his comrades had received letters from India, stating positively that orders had been sent up for our retirement. The man, in fact, explained in detail all our plans—the abandonment and destruction of Khelat—the march of the brigade to bring up camels from Quettah—and he even asserted that

we were preparing to destroy the four corner bastions of the city and the gateways, and that we should leave in a month hence. This decided the chiefs on dropping their offers of accommodation, and holding on until events became more developed."

* It is to be borne in mind that the supreme political authority had been vested by the Indian Government in the General. Nott, however, was not inclined to interfere in the political management of affairs, and Rawlinson continued to conduct them very much as he had done before the order was issued; but he

the morning of the 19th, the British political chief rode out with a party of Parsewan Horse to the mouth of the Baba-Wullee Pass, and, through a crowd of excited gazers, who lined the thoroughfares from the cantonments to the city, brought the Prince into Candahar.*

No easy part was that which Rawlinson was now called upon to play. The conflicting claims and interests of the two Princes greatly distracted and perplexed him. Justice and policy appeared to be at variance with each other. Timour was a well-intentioned man; his fidelity had never been questioned. He was the eldest son of Shah Soojah, and his claims to the throne of Caubul were more valid, therefore, than those of either of his brothers. But he was utterly without influence. Convinced that he could never make his way with the chiefs or people of Afghanistan, the British authorities were unwilling to support his pretensions. Even for the governorship of Candahar they held him to be incompetent; and now that Sufder Jung had returned to his allegiance, they desired, on the earliest fitting opportunity, to place the administration in his

referred all important questions to the General, who, for the most part, deferred to the opinions of his more experienced political associate.

* "June 19.—I went out this morning at daylight with the Parsewan Horse and Tait's Cavalry to the Baba-Wullee Pass. Met Sufder Jung, and brought him back with me to the town. The curiosity evinced by the Candaharees on the occasion was something quite extraordinary—in general, a profound apathy prevails on all these matters, but to-day, to my surprise, the entire population thronged out to see the spectacle, and from the cantonments to the city the road was lined with crowds of gazers. I think this unwonted interest is to be attributed, however, to the excitement produced by the recent dis-

turbances rather than to any popular admiration for the individual. I found Sufder Jung considerably improved; but in the first bustle of reception I could not satisfy myself of his real views and feelings. I took him to breakfast with Prince Timour, where I understand a somewhat singular scene occurred between the brothers. The only feeling they possess in common is, that British support is necessary to protect them from the Barukzyes—on all other points they are diametrically opposed. The General insisted on Sufder Jung's followers being disarmed, which, of course, was anything but agreeable to the boy, though he did not venture to offer any objection."—[Major Rawlinson's *MS. Journal*.]

hands. The Candahar force was under orders to return to Hindostan, and the best means of disposing of Prince Timour was by the quiet removal of his Highness to the British provinces. This was not yet to be openly announced to the Prince, for it was expedient that the measure of withdrawal should not be publicly declared; but Rawlinson hoped, that when the time came, he would be able to persuade Timour to accompany the army to India, and to leave Sufder Jung in possession of Candahar. In the mean while, both Princes were uneasy and dissatisfied. Jealous of his younger brother, Timour protested against his being permitted to mediate for the Douranee chiefs, or to interfere with the Candahar Government; whilst Sufder Jung was continually complaining of the incertitude of his position, and importuning Rawlinson to come to some definite explanation with him.*

So Rawlinson determined to temporise. Putting off from day to day the adjustment of these differences, he trusted to the chapter of accidents, and ere long found something written down in his favour. Before the end of June, it was announced at Candahar that Futteh Jung had been overcome by the Barukzyes at Caubul, and that he was in effect a mere prisoner in their hands. The intelligence, as regarded British interests in general, was supposed to be unfavorable; but it went far to diminish the difficulties which the presence of the two Princes at Candahar arrayed against the British authorities. "Whilst Futteh Jung's star was on the ascendant," wrote Rawlinson in his journal, "it was equally difficult to manage Timour and Sufder Jung; but now they both feel that they are entirely dependent upon us for support, and are disposed, in consequence, to lay aside their private jealousies."

* *Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*

The three first weeks of July passed away; and Nott was preparing for his retirement from Afghanistan. Major Clarkson had, at the end of June, brought up the convoy of camels from Quettah. The supply of carriage and provisions for the movement of the army had now reached its necessary amount. Everything was in train for withdrawal, when the Governor-General's letter of the 4th of July was put into Nott's hands. He saw at once the weight of responsibility that it threw upon him; but he did not shrink from assuming the burden. Cheerfully taking it up, he wrote to the Governor-General on the 20th of July: "Having well considered the subject of your Lordship's letter of the 4th instant; having looked at the difficulties in every point of view, and reflected on the advantages which would attend a successful accomplishment of such a move, and the moral influence it would have throughout Asia, I have come to a determination to retire a portion of the army under my command *via* Ghuznee and Caubul."

The Candahar force was now to be divided. A portion of it was to be sent to Quettah and Sukkur under General England; and the remainder, under General Nott, was to "retire" to India by the route of Ghuznee, Caubul, and Jellalabad. The heavy guns and six pieces of the Shah's artillery were to be sent down with England's column, and with it were to be despatched the Bombay Infantry, two companies of Bengal Artillery, three regiments of the late Shah's force, and some details of Irregular Horse. Nott would not part with one of those beautiful Sepoy regiments which had fought so well for him ever since he had commanded the Candahar division; nor could he think of suffering the 40th Queen's to be disunited from their old comrades. But of the 41st Queen's he wrote to Lord Ellenborough: "I certainly could have wished to have taken her

Majesty's 41st Regiment with me, knowing the great consequence of the adventurous march before me. But when I look to Sindh, and to the want of confidence in our brave troops shown by certain officers, I must give up that wish, however desirable, to ensure the safety of the division which I am not to accompany." But he subsequently changed his mind, and took the 41st with him. Two or three days passed; some slight preparations betokening departure were made; the old and unserviceable guns were destroyed; the repairs which were going on, on the works, were arrested; and then it was publicly announced that the force was to hold itself in readiness to return to India. But by what route it was to retire was still a secret. Speculation was busy throughout the garrison. There were all sorts of rumours and conjectures, and then it was declared that Nott's column was to make its way across the country by the route of Dehra Ismael Khan. It soon, however, was obvious that this was nothing more than a report, which might have its uses, and the heart of every soldier in Nott's division soon beat with chivalrous emotion at the thought, that the General under whom they had so long and so gloriously served was about to lead them on to the re-conquest of Afghanistan.*

And now again came up for adjustment, rather than for consideration, the question of the disposal of the Princes. Timour was eager to proceed with the British force to Caubul, and hoped to be placed upon the throne by

* "The particular object to be gained by adopting this latter route it was difficult to divine, and the generally-received impression among the officers—perhaps because the one most desired—was that our General was to lead us on to Caubul, and that the mention of Dehra Ismael Khan was merely to throw dust in the eyes of the natives. Indeed, it was after-

wards accounted for, whether justly or not, by this fact, that if the Lohannies, upon whom we were dependant for a large proportion of our camels, had had an idea that our intention was to have marched on Ghuznee and Caubul, they would have declined accompanying our army."—[*Neill's Recollections.*]

his old supporters. His fidelity at least deserved our support—but something else was required to induce the British authorities to identify themselves with the interests of the Prince. It was fortunate for Rawlinson that at this time the decision was not left in his hands. On the 29th of July letters were received from the Governor-General, emphatically expressing his opinion of the inexpediency of permitting the Prince to accompany the army in the direction of Caubul, or even of permitting him to remain at Candahar. His presence at Caubul, it was said, might greatly embarrass our proceedings there; and though it would be advantageous for us that he should establish his independent authority at Candahar, there seemed so little likelihood of his being able to maintain his position after the departure of the British troops, that, on the whole, it was the most expedient course that he should accompany that portion of the force which was to proceed by the way of Sindh to the provinces of India. The communication of these resolutions to the Shaz-zadah was a painful duty; and when Rawlinson announced them, they produced an explosion very foreign to the passive nature of the apathetic Prince.*

On the 7th of August the British force evacuated Candahar. There were no demonstrations of ill-will on the part of the inhabitants. No acts of licentiousness were committed by the soldiery.† The movement was

* "July 29.—I duly communicated these instructions to Prince Timour in the evening, and the interview was as disagreeable a one as I ever went through. His Royal Highness had previously made up his mind that he was to accompany the force to Caubul, and on our withdrawal that he would be left by us on the throne. The sudden change in all his views which my communication involved,

roused him for once from his natural insensibility, and he spoke his mind pretty plainly."—[*Major Rawlinson's MS. Journal.*]

† "Aug. 7.—We have this evening evacuated Candahar in the most regular and orderly manner conceivable. There has been no indication of ill-will on the part of the citizens, no disposition on the part of the Sepoys to indulge in military license.

from Mookoor to the Khybur," ~~was~~ necessary that our troops should be continually in the field. And it was not always child's play in which they were summoned to engage. Aktur Khan, that "indomitable Moofsid," was now, at the beginning of July, still in arms before Ghiresk, with a body of three thousand men, and it was necessary to strike a blow at the rebel chief.* So

* Macnaghten's correspondence, during these months of June and July, afford many illustrations of his views with reference to the policy to be pursued towards the disaffected chiefs. They show that he had, as he sometimes mournfully acknowledged, become by this time an adept in intrigue. His natural humanity, too, seems to have been somewhat blunted :

"June 20.—I am out of all patience with Aktur Khan, but I feel satisfied that a judicious use of the Janbaz will extirpate the villain. If not, we must tolerate his audacity no longer; and a regular force must be sent after him, to hunt him to the world's end.

"June 24.—You will never get any good out of your Douranee allies. I don't understand why you should wait until Ghiresk is taken, before you send out a force to quell this insurrection. Nothing is so catching in this country as the spirit of rebellion; and if the insurgents should gain possession of Ghiresk, I apprehend a very general rising in favour of that contemptible rascal, Aktur Khan. . . . Our predicament as regards these Afghan chiefs is by no means an enviable one. They are such arrant blockheads, that any knave may in a day make a traitor of the most loyal of them. . . . This is my day for receiving natives, and I don't remember when I have been so bothered. Certes, reform is a troublesome thing to manage in any country."

On the 2nd of July, he wrote : "If the garrison of Ghiresk will only hold out a few days longer, and Aktur Khan will only have the goodness to remain until Hart gets in rear of him, I confidently hope that his carcase is ere now a prey to the vultures. Certes, he is a most impudent *sug*.

"July 16.—I had a visit from Atta Khan yesterday. I never beheld a more forbidding countenance than that which graces the shoulders of this worthy. The fool predominates over the villain; but there is at the same time a vicious-looking obstinacy of purpose about the lips and features generally, which would lead me to suppose, that though the man had not intellect enough to discern his true interests, yet that he would be a most dangerous instrument in the hands of designing persons. . . . What do you think of sending a secret and trustworthy emissary to Aktur Khan, and promising him protection in the event of his divulging the names of all those from whom he received assistance in Candahar? Though a dishonest man, he is a contemptible fellow. Our object is not so much to punish him for his audacity, as to prevent future rebellions; and this would be effectually done by making an example of those who, keeping in the background themselves, have instigated other poor devils to go to slaughter. If you communicate with Aktur, I would treat him as if we knew he was but an instrument in the hands of others. I do not at present know where I can obtain evidence to convict Sydul or Atta Khan, or even the Chaos-Bashee. Could you send me Meer Aulum's letter, and any witnesses to prove that the Chaos-Bashee made use of the treasonable language imputed to him on the road to Candahar? Tej Khan accompanied him, and that scoundrel I believe to be at the bottom of the whole Fussad. If there are no strong political objections to the measure, pray lose no

Woodburn, a fine dashing officer, who commanded one of the Shah's regiments, was sent out against him, with his own corps (the 5th Infantry), two detachments of Janbaz, or Afghan Horse, under Hart and Golding, and some guns of the Shah's Horse Artillery, under Cooper. The enemy were posted on the other side of the river. Woodburn tried the fords, but they were impassable. Hart, however, had tried them at another point, but, finding himself unsupported, he returned. This was in early morning. Four hours after noon the enemy struck their camp, and soon afterwards commenced the

time in urging the Prince to seize and imprison him. In my letter of yesterday, I named four disaffected Moolalis, whom I suggested that the Prince should send for and rate soundly. This should be done in open Durbar; and I am not certain that it would not be advisable, '*pour encourager les autres*,' to hang up one or two of the rebels taken *flagrante delicto*. But this is a matter best left to your own discretion."

On the 19th, he wrote: "I saw his Majesty yesterday evening, when we had a good deal of conversation as to the expediency of seizing Atta Khan and Sydul Khan. One of his Majesty's arguments against the measure was to me convincing. He said, 'I sent an honourable invitation to these individuals and *sugs*, as they are. Who would ever believe my word again if I were now to seize them, in defiance of the implied pledge?' So they will remain at large, but be well looked after and deprived of power and money. His Majesty quaintly observed, 'If you wish to destroy a blind man, it is not necessary to kill him. Take away his stick.'

"*July 26.*—Sydul Khan and Atta Khan both deserve to be hung; but I have already told you that his Majesty is prevented from bringing these individuals to condign punishment by the consideration (and it is a weighty

one) of his having invited them to Caubul on a promise of honourable treatment. The same reason does not apply to the Chaoos-Bashce; and I hope, in the course of to-morrow, to request you to send evidence against him, or to tell you that he has expiated his offence on the gallows. You are the best judge of the expediency of arresting Taj Khan. . . . My own notion is, that this (the league between Persia and Herat) will not induce Lord Auckland to swerve from his pacific policy, and that he will rely on the return of our ambassador to Teheran for setting matters to rights. But, in the mean while, what will Yar Mahomed be about? I fear that he will be desperate, since we have told him distinctly that we will not tolerate a Persian ascendancy at Herat; and this seems to be already established by his submission. He may therefore imagine that he could not be worse off; and he may feel really inclined to invade Candahar. In this case, would it be prudent to leave one regular regiment in advance, far from support? But this is a consideration which will have suggested it to yourself. The rebels in the Kohistan are still giving us trouble; but I hope to arrange that affair without the employment of troops. Leech writes cheerfully of his prospects."

passage of the river. Woodburn made his arrangements for their reception. The Douranees made a spirited attack, but Woodburn's infantry, well supported by Cooper's guns, met them with too prompt and sure a fire to encourage them to greater boldness. The Janbaz, already graduating in treachery and cowardice, covered themselves with that peculiar kind of glory which clung to them to the end of the war. It was a busy night. The enemy far outnumbered Woodburn; but the steady gallantry of his gunners and his footmen achieved the success they deserved. Before daybreak the enemy had withdrawn. It would have been a great thing to have followed up and dispersed the rebels, but with all the country against him, and a body of horse at his back, on which no reliance could be placed, it would have been madness to make the attempt.

The month of August found the Envoy still cheerful and sanguine. The convulsions of the Douranees and the spasms of the Ghilzyes were regarded by him as the accompaniments only of those infantine fevers which were inseparable from the existence of the tribes. In vain Rawlinson, with steady eye watching these symptoms, and probing with deep sagacity the causes of the mortal ailments out of which arose all those fierce throes of anguish, protested that throughout Western Afghanistan there was a strong national feeling against us; and that difficulties and dangers were coiling their serpent folds around us with irresistible force. Macnaghten still asked what we had to fear, and thus, on the 2nd of August, addressed his less sanguine colleague:

I am not going to read you a lecture, first, because when you indited your letter of the 28th ult. you pleaded guilty to the influence of bile; and secondly, because at the present writing I must own the same impeachment; but I must pen a few remarks, in the hope of inducing you to regard matters a little more

"*couleur de rose*." You say, "The state of the country causes me many an anxious thought—we may thresh the Douranees over and over again, but this rather aggravates than obviates the difficulty of overcoming the national feeling against us—in fact, our tenure is positively that of military possession, and the French in Algiers, and the Russians in Circassia, afford us an example on a small scale of the difficulty of our position." Now upon what do you found your assertion that there is a national feeling against us, such as that against the French in Algiers or the Russians in Circassia? Solely, so far as I know, because the turbulent Douranees have risen in rebellion. From Mookoor to the Khybur Pass all is content and tranquillity, and wherever we Europeans go we are received with respect, and attention, and welcome. But the insurrection of the Douranees is no new occurrence. The history of the rule of the Barukzye Sirdars would show that they were engaged in one continuous struggle with their turbulent brethren. If they were able to reduce them to subjection with their contemptible means, what should we have to fear from them? We have given them something to lose which they had not before; and you may rely upon it that they will be quiet enough as soon as they are satisfied (which they ought to be pretty well by this time) of the futility of opposition, provided some means are adopted of preventing Yar Mahomed from carrying on his intrigues. Then, the Ghilzyes have been in arms. True. But it would have been unreasonable to suppose that they should surrender their independence without a struggle, and we have now put the bit in their mouths. I do not concur with you as to the difficulty of our position. On the contrary, I think our prospects are most cheering, and with the materials we have there ought to be little or no difficulty in the management of the country.

It is true the population is exclusively Mahomedan, but it is split into rival sects; and we all know that of all antipathies the sectarian is the most virulent. We have Hazaras, Ghilzyes, Douranees, and Kuzzilbashes, all at daggers drawn with each other, and in every family there are rivals and enemies. Some faults of management must necessarily be committed on the first assumption of the administration of a new country, and the Douranee outbreak may be partially attributed to such faults; but what, after all, do such outbreaks signify? The modern history of India teems with such instances. There is hardly a district in which

some desperate adventurer has not appeared at some time or other, and drawn the entire population after him. The whole province of Bareilly, in 1817, rose against us on a religious war-cry. The whole province of Cuttack, shortly afterwards, followed the standard of the rebel Jugbeneda, and we had infinite trouble in quelling the insurrection. Instances of this kind might be infinitely multiplied, and yet we find the effects of such outbreaks are very evanescent. The people of this country are very credulous. They believe any story invented to our prejudice; but they will very soon learn that we are not the cannibals we are painted. Mr. Gorman's fate was doubtless very melancholy; but are there no assassinations in other countries? I read in the *Bombay Times* only this morning an account of a cavalry officer being shot at in the open day in one of our villages. You say, "The infatuated town's-people are even beginning now to show their teeth; there have been three cases to-day of stones thrown from the tops of the houses on Sepoys' heads walking along the streets." Certainly our troops can be no great favourites in a town where they have turned out half the inhabitants for their own accommodation; but I will venture to say there is not a county town in England where soldiers are quartered in which similar excesses have not happened. European and Native soldiers have traversed the town of Candahar unarmed; and though it is to be apprehended that their conduct has been occasionally very aggravating, only two assaults have been committed upon them. When I went to Hyderabad in 1810, and for many years after, no European could venture to show himself in the city, such was the state of feeling against us. Look upon this picture and on that. Now I believe the lieges of Hyderabad look upon us as very innocent Kaffirs.

You are quite right, I think, in directing Pattinson to accept the submission of all the rebels, save Aktur, who may be desirous of coming in. They should be required to furnish security for appearance sake. But these people are perfect children, and should be treated as such. If we put one naughty boy in the corner, the rest will be terrified. We have taken their plaything, power, out of the hands of the Dourance chiefs, and they are pouting a good deal in consequence. They did not know how to use it. In their hands it was useless and even hurtful to their master, and we were obliged to transfer it to scholars of our own. They instigate the Moollahs, and the Moollahs preach to the people; but

this will be very temporary. The evil of it we must have borne with, or abandoned all hope of forming a national army.* . . .

The Douranee children, however, required more chastisement. No man could have done more than Woodburn did with his means; but these means were insufficient. It was the custom then, both against the Ghilzyes and the Dourances, to send out detachments sufficiently large to accomplish, with the aid of their guns, small victories over the enemy, and so to increase the bitterness of their hostility, without breaking their strength. Aktur Khan was still in arms. Banded with him was Akrum Khan, another Douranee chief, inspired with like bitter hatred of the restored monarch and his Feringhee allies. A force under Captain Griffin was now sent out against them. It was strong in the mounted branch. Eight hundred sabres, three hundred and fifty bayonets, and four six-pounder guns, followed Griffin into the field of Zemindawer. On the 17th of August he came up with the insurgents. It was a moment of some anxiety. The *Janbaz* had not by their conduct under Woodburn won the confidence of the British officers. Nott always mistrusted them, and the feeling was, not unreasonably, shared by others.† But here they were associated with the men of the King's regular cavalry, and they may have felt the danger of defection. Be the cause what it may, they did no

* *MS. Correspondence.*

† Nott's disparagement of the *Janbaz* so irritated Macnaghten, and displeased Lord Auckland, that his removal from Candahar was contemplated. The following extracts from Macnaghten's correspondence show what was thought on the subject: "*September 2.*—Between you and me, Lord A. is much displeased with General Nott for his light and indiscriminate censure and disparagement of the *Janbaz*; and I think his displeasure will be increased when he

peruses the General's subsequent, and most uncandid despatch, in which he omitted all notice of the exemplary conduct of the *Janbaz* at Secunderabad.

"*September 5.*—You are not likely to have Nott with you much longer. His conduct in respect to the *Janbaz* has elicited the severest displeasure of government, by whom he has been declared disqualified for his present important command."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

shrink from the encounter. The enemy were strongly posted in a succession of walled gardens and small forts, from which they opened a heavy matchlock fire upon our advancing troops; but the fire of our guns and musketry drove them from their enclosures, and then the cavalry, headed by the young Prince Suffer Jung, who had something more than the common energy of the royal race, charged with terrific effect, and utterly broke the discomfited mass of Douranees. The victory was a great one. Aktur Khan fled. The Douranees were disheartened; and for a time they sunk into the repose of feebleness and exhaustion.

The Ghilzyes, too, had received another check. Colonel Chambers, early in August, had been sent out against them, with a party of his own regiment, the 5th Light Cavalry, the 16th and 43rd Sepoy Regiments, and some details of Irregular Horse. He came up with the enemy on the morning of the 5th; but before he could bring the main body of his troops into action, a party of his cavalry had fallen upon them and scattered them in disastrous flight.

Under the influence of these victories, Macnaghten's confidence rose higher and higher. The Douranees were broken, and the Ghilzyes had submitted "almost without a blow." Aktur Khan had fled, and the "Gooroo" had surrendered. Now, indeed, the Envoy thought that he might report "all quiet from Dan to Beersheba." If anything caused him a moment's inquietude, it was the thought that Aktur Khan, the favourite son of Dost Mahomed, was still abroad, hovering about Khooloom. With something that now seems like a strange presentiment, he wrote that "the fellow would be after some mischief, should the opportunity present itself." It was on the 20th of August that, writing to Mr. Robertson, he thus expressed himself:

The victory of the Helmund was very complete. I believe the enemy on that occasion was as numerous a body as could ever be congregated in this country, consisting of some 4000 or 5000 men. The Douranees want one more threshing, and then they would be quite satisfied of the futility of opposing us; but my last letter from Rawlinson gave me no hope that they would collect again. The whole of the Ghilzye tribes have submitted almost without a blow; for the gallant little affair in which the 5th Cavalry redeemed the honour of that branch of the service, could hardly be dignified with the name of a fight. Those who knew this country when it was ruled by Barukzyes, are amazed at the metamorphosis it has undergone, and with so little bloodshed. The former rulers were eternally fighting with their subjects from one year's end to another. Now we cannot move a *naick* and four without having all the newspapers setting up a yell about the unpopularity of the Shah. The Shah is unpopular with the Dourance Khans, and we have made him so by supplanting them, and taking the military power which they were incompetent to use from their hands into our own. With all other classes his Majesty is decidedly, but deservedly, popular, and the Khans are too contemptible to be cared about. . . .

We have had very unpleasant intelligence from Bokhara, it being reported that Colonel Stoddart is again in disgrace and confinement; and I am the more alarmed about this, from thinking it probable that Arthur Conolly will return from Kokund *via* Bokhara. But the intelligence requires confirmation. Mahomed Aktur, the Dost's favourite son, is still at Khooloon, and has rejected my overture to come in. The fellow will be after some mischief, should the opportunity present itself. . . . You will see that Shah Soojah has most handsomely given back Cutchee and Moostung to the young Khan of Khelat. His Majesty's revenue is little more than fifteen lakhs per annum—hardly enough for the maintenance of his personal state—and yet the government below are perpetually writing to me that this charge and that charge is to be defrayed out of his "Majesty's resources!" God help the poor man and his resources!! The country is perfectly quiet from Dan to Beersheba.*

* *MS. Correspondence.*

But although all was quiet from Dan to Beersheba, there was a considerable force out in the Dehrawut, and a party of indomitable Douranees still defying the King and his allies. Akrum Khan refused to submit. It was determined, therefore, to make an attempt to seize him. It was not difficult to find one, willing for a few pieces of gold, to lead a small party of our people to the lair of the untamed chief. John Conolly, with a little band of horsemen, went out on this duty. It is said that the legs of the guide were tied under his horse's belly, that he might not treacherously escape. Akrum Khan was surprised, captured, and carried, a doomed captive, to Candahar, where, under the orders of Prince Timour, he was blown from a gun.

I cannot close this chapter without a few more words relating to Todd and the Herat Mission. That, in one sense, the Mission failed, is certain; but, there were some of Todd's measures which did not fail, and it is not to be forgotten that on his own responsibility he despatched Abbott and Shakespear to Khiva, and the good that was done by these Missions was often in the retrospect a solace to him in after days, when smarting under the injustice of his masters.* Lord Auckland never forgave

* I cannot refrain from quoting here a letter on this subject from Todd to Outram, written before his removal from political employment:

"Your kind letter of November 3rd reached me a few days ago. I would fain send you an adequate return, but I am out of sorts, and, besides, have but little to tell you. Shakespear's proceedings have been in all respects admirable. The zeal, perseverance, and judgment he has displayed throughout his arduous undertaking, entitle him to the highest praise; and I trust he will be rewarded as he deserves. The property restored by Russia is valued

at upwards of a crore of rupees; and the number of merchants and others released, exceeds 600. The news was received at Khiva with every demonstration of joy; and Shakespear's name has been inserted in the calendar of Oos-beg saints! The Russians, by liberating their captives immediately on the arrival of Shakespear and his 'company,' have given a strong proof that they are unwilling or unable to renew their attempt on Khiva; and I hope that they will now be prevented taking up that formidable position on the road to India. I cannot help congratulating myself on even the

him. His departure from Herat was inopportune; for, although Todd had no reason to believe the settlement of our differences with Persia was any nearer to its consummation than it had been for some time, they were then on the eve of adjustment. So Todd, remanded to his regiment, proceeded to join it at the head-quarters of the Artillery at Dum-Dum. "Equal to either fortune," he fell back upon the common routine of regimental service, and, in command of a company of Foot Artillery, devoted himself with as much earnest and assiduous zeal to the minutiae of military duty, as he had done, a year before, to the affairs of the Herat Mission. It has often been said that political employ unfits a man for regimental duty; but Major Todd, from the time that he first rejoined his regiment to the hour of his death, never slackened in his attention to his military duties; and, perhaps, in the whole range of the service, there was not a more zealous, a more assiduous—in other words, a more conscientious regimental officer than the old antagonist of Yar Mahomed. The trait of character here illustrated is a rarer one than many may suppose. Nothing in his political life became him like the leaving of it. There are few who know how, gracefully, to *descend*.

small share which I have had in these proceedings. Had I waited for orders, the Russians might have been within a few marches of Khiva; and had we been satisfied with the tales of Sir Alexander's agents, we should have now believed the Russians 300,000 strong, and to be within as short a distance of Caubul. The road between Teheran and this place is infested by roving bands of Toorkomans, who have been let loose on Persian Khorassan by the Khan of Khiva. His Highness thinks that he is thus doing us service; but I have written to undeceive him in this matter, and I have pointed out to him that the practice of man-stealing is abhorrent to us, whether the man be a Russian or a Persian. His conduct

on this occasion reminds me of an answer given to me by Mahomed Shah's Wuzer, one Meerza Mahomed, a great oaf. I had been superintending some artillery practice at Teheran. A jackass having been placed as the target, I remonstrated against the cruelty of putting up one of God's creatures as a mark, when wood or canvas would answer every purpose. The Wuzer replied, 'On my eyes be it, I will stick up a pony next time.' As if I had specially pleaded the case of jackasses.

"Sheil thinks that the prospect of a settlement of our differences with Persia is as distant as ever, and is strongly opposed to my plan of allowing the Shah to keep Ghorian, and retaining possession of Karrack."

It is not improbable that these years of regimental duty were the happiest period of his life. Shortly after his return to the Presidency, from which he had so long been absent, he married; and in the enjoyment of domestic happiness, such as has rarely been surpassed, he soon forgot the injustice that had been done to him. Cheerfully doing his duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call him, respected and beloved by all who had the means of appreciating the simplicity of his manners, the kindness of his heart, the soundness of his intelligence, and the integrity of his conduct, he found that, in exchanging the excitement of a semi-barbarous Court for the tranquillity of cantonment life and the companionship of a gentle and amiable wife, the barter, though not self-sought, had been greatly to his advantage.

Being appointed to the command of a horse-field battery, stationed at Delhi, he left Dum-Dum for the imperial city, where he continued to serve, until, shortly before the Sikh invasion, he attained that great object of regimental ambition, the command of a troop of horse-artillery. In the Upper Provinces, he had more than once been disquieted by the illness of his young and fondly-loved wife; but the heavy blow, which was to prostrate all his earthly happiness, did not descend upon him until within a few days of that memorable 18th of December, which saw the British army fling itself upon the Sikh batteries at Mudkhi. It was at Ferozshuhur that Todd, broken-hearted, with a strong presentiment of his approaching end, perhaps, in the extremity of his anguish, scarcely wishing to escape destruction, led his troop into action and perished in the unequal conflict,* and among the many who fell on that mournful day, there was not a braver soldier or a better man.

* *Calcutta Review*. A round shot from one of the Sikh batteries, I believe, carried off his head.

CHAPTER IV.

[September—October: 1841.]

Aspect of Affairs at Caubul—The King—The Envoy—Burnes—Elphinstone—The English at Caubul—Expenses of the War—Retrenchment of the Subsidies—Risings of the Ghilzyes—Sale's Brigade—Gatherings in the Kohistan.—Sale's Arrival at Gundamuck—The 1st of November.

TAKING advantage of the lull that followed the defeat of the Douranees and the Ghilzyes in Western Afghanistan, it is advisable that I should glance briefly at the general condition of things at the capital in this month of September.

The King was in the Balla Hissar. Discontented and unhappy, he complained that he had no real authority; that the English gentlemen were managing the affairs of his kingdom; and that he himself was a mere pageant and a show. He had watched with satisfaction the growth of the difficulties which were besetting the path of his allies, and was not without a hope that their further development would be attended by our withdrawal from so troubled a sphere. It was plain to him that, although deference was outwardly shown to his opinions, and a pretence of consulting his wishes was made by his British advisers, they really held all the power in their hands; and he said, complainingly, to one

of them,* for whom he entertained no little personal affection, that he "did not understand his position." The appointment of the new minister, Oosman Khan, in the place of his old and tried servant, Moollah Shikore, had been extremely distasteful to him; and it chafed him to think that a functionary so appointed must necessarily be less eager to fulfil his wishes than those of his European allies.†

* Captain Macgregor.—[See *Macgregor's Report on the Causes of the Caubul Outbreak.*]

† The King's health too, began to fail him about this time, and Macnaghten began to consider the expediency of sending for the heir apparent. On the 5th of September, he wrote to Rawlinson, complaining that his Majesty, since the return of his family, had been in a very nervous and irritable state:

"September 5.—I have lately had a great deal of trouble with our good old King, who, since the arrival of his family, seems to have lost all his nerve and temper. But I hope to bring him round again soon, for he has a large stock of sterling good sense."

By the beginning of the third week of September, the King had worked himself into a fever:

"September 21.—His Majesty is ill of fever, which has been hanging about him for some time; and, at his time of life, the issue, to say the least of it, is very doubtful. It seems to be in the highest degree desirable that Shah-zadah 'Timour should be here, in the event of a fatal termination of his Majesty's illness. The Nizam-ood-Dowlah and I have had a serious conversation this morning on the subject: He thinks, and I am disposed to agree with him, that it might be well if Shah-zadah 'Timour were to address an arceza to his Majesty, stating how much grieved he was to hear of his Majesty's illness—the intelligence of which had filled him with so much uneasiness as to

incapacitate him from the proper performance of the duties of government, and expressing an earnest desire to come and kiss his Majesty's feet, and thereby give relief to his mind."

Next day, however, the King was better, and Macnaghten wrote:

"September 22.—I am happy to tell you that his Majesty is very much better to-day—so much so, indeed, that if you have not spoken to the Shah-zadah on the subject of my yesterday's note, I think it unnecessary to do so."

Prince 'Timour was, at this time, governor of Candahar. Futteh Jung had, in the first instance, been stationed at the western capital; but the atrocities he had committed compelled his removal. One of Macnaghten's letters (*September 21, 1840*) contains an abominable story, which had travelled to Caubul, hardly fit for publication, but horribly illustrative of the cruelty of the Prince. He was subsequently removed, and his brother, a very moderate and respectable man, sent to Candahar in his place. Sir Jasper Nicolls' Journal contains a notice of the Prince's removal: "Futteh Jung has just been removed by force from Candahar, for tyranny, extortion, drunkenness, and all manner of crimes. His removal was skilfully performed by Major Rawlinson. The fellow loaded his double-barrelled pistols when he suspected all was not right; but his attached servants were one by one called away, and his younger brother also, and he feared to act alone."—[*MS. Journal.*]

Macnaghten, indeed, was paramount at Caubul. But the days of his Afghan sovereignty were numbered. He was about to receive the reward of a life of successful and appreciated service, and to end his official days in comparative quiet and repose. He was about to escape out of the cares and inquietudes—the difficulties and dangers—the incessant harassing turmoil and excitement of a life of responsibility among a turbulent and discontented people, and to commence a new career of useful and honoured public service, upon a less stormy and tumultuous scene. He had been appointed Governor of Bombay. The same recognition of approved zeal and capacity which had been extended to Malcolm and Elphinstone, had now come to testify the estimation in which Macnaghten's services were held by his employers. It was a high and a flattering mark of confidence, and it was doubly welcome after all the doubts and misgivings engendered in his mind by the implied censures of his immediate superior. The value of the gift, too, was enhanced by the seasonableness of the time at which it was received. Macnaghten looked around him, and saw that "everything was quiet from Dan to Beersheba;" and he rejoiced in the thought that he was about to quit Afghanistan for ever, and to carry with him no burden of anxiety and fear.

Burnes was also at Caubul. He had been there ever since the restoration of the Shah, in a strange unrecognised position, of which it is difficult to give any intelligible account. He used to say, that he was in the "most nondescript of situations." It appears to have been his mission in Afghanistan to draw a large salary every month, and to give advice that was never taken.* This

* On the 1st of April, 1841, Burnes to his brother: "I am now a highly described his position thus, in a letter paid idler, having no less than 3500

might have satisfied many men. It did not satisfy Burnes. He said that he wanted responsibility; and under Macnaghten he had none. He had no precise duties of any kind; but he watched all that was going on in Afghanistan with a comprehending eye and an understanding brain, and he wrote, in the shape of letters to Macnaghten, long and elaborate papers on the state and prospects of Afghanistan, which his official chief dismissed with a few pencil-notes, for the most part of contemptuous dissent. Burnes saw clearly that everything was going wrong. He probed, deeply and searchingly, the great wound of national discontent—a mighty sore that was ever running—and he felt in his inmost soul that the death-throes of such a system could not be very remote. But better days were now beginning to dawn upon him. He had been waiting for Macnaghten's office, and now, at last, it seemed to be within his reach. A few weeks, and he would be supreme at Caubul; and the great object of his ambition gained.

The command of the troops was in the hands of General Elphinstone—an old officer of the Queen's service, of good repute, gentlemanly manners, and aristocratic connexions. He had succeeded Sir Willoughby Cotton in the early part of the year. But it must have been a wonder to him, as it was to all who knew him, what business he had in such a place. He had no Indian experience of any kind, and he was pressed down by physical infirmities. When Sir Willoughby Cotton intimated his desire, on the plea of ill health, to be relieved from the command of the troops in Afghanistan,

rupees a month as Resident at Caubul, and being, as the lawyers call it, only counsel, and that, too, a dumb one—

by which I mean that I give paper opinions, but I do not work them out."

there was an officer already in the country to whom their charge might have been safely delegated. But he was not in favour either at the Mission or at the Calcutta Government House. Sir Jasper Nicolls would have placed Nott in command; but there were obstacles to his appointment, at which I have already hinted; and it was deemed expedient to send to Caubul a man of a more ductile nature, with as few opinions of his own as might be to clash with those of the political chief. So Lord Auckland despatched General Elphinstone to Afghanistan—not in ignorance of his disqualifications, for they were pointed out to him by others—but in spite of a clear perception of them. Whether those who sent the brave old gentleman to India with all his infirmities thick upon him, recommended him for this especial field of service, or whether any notions of routine and the obligations of the roster pressed themselves upon Lord Auckland with irresistible force, I cannot confidently declare; but so inexplicable by any reference to intelligible human motives and actions is an appointment of this kind, that it is impossible not to recognise in such a dispensation a mightier agency than that of man, or to reject the belief that, when Elphinstone went to Caubul, the curse which sate upon our unholy policy was working onward for our overthrow.

Next in rank to General Elphinstone were Sir Robert Sale and Brigadier Shelton—both officers of the Queen's service, but soldiers of long Indian experience. Each had served with his regiment in the Burmese war; and each had acquired a reputation for the highest personal courage. Sale's regiment was the 13th Light Infantry. Shelton's was the 44th.* Both of these regiments were

* Shelton had come up from India His brigade was employed against the 44th, through the Punjaub. the refractory tribes of the Sunghoo-

now at Caubul. But the 13th was about to return to India, and soon afterwards to Great Britain. It had seen many years of Indian service, and had been in Afghanistan since Keane's army first entered the country. The 44th had come up early in the year, and had done some service in the Naziain valley, near Jellalabad, on the way.

The main body of the British troops were in the new cantonments. These works had been erected in the course of 1840. They were situated on a piece of low ground open to the Kohistan road. They were extensive and ill defended. They were nearly a mile in extent, and were surrounded by ramparts so little formidable that they might be ridden over.* Near the cantonments was the Mission compound, occupying an extensive space, and surrounded by a number of houses and buildings belonging to the officers and retainers of the Mission. There was here, also, a weak attempt at defence; but the walls were beyond measure contemptible; and the whole expanse of building, the entrenched camp and Mission compound together, were so planted, as to be swept on every side by hills, and forts, and villages, and whatever else in such a country could bristle with armed men. No such works were ever known—so wretched in themselves, and so doubly wretched by position. If the object of those who constructed them had been to place our troops at the mercy of an enemy, they could not have been devised more cunningly in furtherance of such an end. They were commanded on

Khail in the month of February, and reduced them to a fitting state of subjection; but not without the loss of two valuable officers. Lieutenant Pigou, of the Engineers, was blown to pieces, whilst endeavouring to force in, with powder, the gates of

a fort; and Captain Douglas, Assistant-Adjutant-General, was shot dead by the side of the Brigadier.

* A small pony, says Lieutenant Rattray, was backed by an officer to scramble down the ditch and over the wall.

every side; and so surrounded with villages, forts, gardens, and other cover for an enemy, that our troops could neither enter nor leave the camp without exposing themselves to a raking fire from some one of these points of attack. And to crown the calamity of the whole, the Commissariat supplies, on which our army depended for its subsistence, were stored in a small fort, not within, but beyond, the cantonments. The communication between the two places was commanded by an empty fort, and by a walled garden, inviting the occupation of an enemy. Human folly seemed to have reached its height in the construction of these works. There stood these great, indefensible cantonments, overawed on every side, a monument of the madness which Providence, for its own ends, had permitted to cloud and bewilder the intelligence of the "greatest military nation of the world." There it stood, a humiliating spectacle; but except by new comers, who stood in amazement before the great folly, little account was taken of it. Men's eyes had become accustomed to the blot.*

The English had by this time begun to settle them-

* A writer already quoted, of high authority on this point, says: "It has been already noted, that the tenacity of purpose displayed by the engineer, Durand, had forced Macnaghten and the reluctant Shah into the precaution of constructing barracks and occupying with troops the Balla Hissar; also, it has been mentioned, that the Envoy subsequently gave up these barracks to the Shah for the use of the 160 ladies and women of the Harem, and threw up all military hold of this important post. Sturt, Durand's successor, was in nowise participant in this grievous error: for he too pertinaciously advocated placing the troops in the

Balla Hissar, clearing it of all private houses, and rendering it a good stronghold. It is bitter to think, that had the repair of the works and their improvement been commenced in 1839, when urged by the first engineer, or even later, when again pressed by the second engineer, a tithe of the sums thrown away at Herat would have rendered the Balla Hissar, by November, 1841, a fortress impregnable, when held by a British garrison, against all that the disaffected Afghans could have brought before its walls." The same writer adds: "These grave errors had been committed, it must be remembered, in justice to the memory

selves down in Caubul. Indeed, from the very commencement, they had done their best, as they ever do, to accommodate themselves to new localities and new circumstances, and had transplanted their habits, and, I fear it must be added, their vices, with great address, to the capital of the Douranee Empire. It was plain that they were making themselves at home in the chief city of the Afghans. There was no sign of an intended departure. They were building and furnishing houses for themselves—laying out gardens—surrounding themselves with the comforts and luxuries of European life. Some had sent for their wives and children. Lady Macnaghten, Lady Sale, and other English women, were domesticated in comfortable houses within the limits of the great folly we had erected on the plain. The English, indeed, had begun to find the place not wholly unendurable. The fine climate braced and exhilarated them. There was no lack of amusement. They rode races; they played at cricket. They got up dramatic entertainments. They went out fishing; they went out shooting. When winter fell upon them, and the heavy frosts covered the lakes with ice, to the infinite astonishment of the Afghans they skimmed over the smooth surface on their skates. There is no want of manliness among the Afghans; but the manliness of the Feringhee strangers quite put them to shame. They did not like us the less for that. The athletic amusements of our people only raised their admiration. But there was something else which filled them with intensest hate.*

of the gallant, but luckless Elphinstone, before his arrival at Caubul. He at once observed them and sought to have them remedied; but holding a secondary place, the safety of his troops and their magazines was made likewise of secondary consideration,

and sacrificed to a false show of security."—[*Calcutta Review*.]

* For a pleasant descriptive sketch of the amusements of the English at Caubul, see Mr. Gleig's account of the *Operations of Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan*.

I am not writing an apology. There are truths which must be spoken. The temptations which are most difficult to withstand, were not withstood by our English officers. The attractions of the women of Caubul they did not know how to resist. The Afghans are very jealous of the honour of their women; and there were things done in Caubul which covered them with shame and roused them to revenge. The inmate of the Mahomedan Zenana was not unwilling to visit the quarters of the Christian stranger. For two long years, now, had this shame been burning itself into the hearts of the Caubulees; and there were some men of note and influence among them who knew themselves to be thus wronged. Complaints were made; but they were made in vain. The scandal was open, undisguised, notorious. Redress was not to be obtained. The evil was not in course of suppression. It went on till it became intolerable; and the injured then began to see that the only remedy was in their own hands. It is enough to state broadly this painful fact. There are many who can fill in with vivid personality all the melancholy details of this chapter of human weakness, and supply a catalogue of the wrongs which were soon to be so fearfully redressed.

Such, dimly traced in their social aspects, was the general condition of things at Caubul in this month of September, 1841. Politically—such was Macnaghten's conviction—everything was quiet from Dan to Beer-sheba. The noses of the Douranee Khans had, he said, "been brought to the grindstone;"* and the Gooroo and

* Macnaghten had by this time arrived at the conclusion that it was necessary to adopt towards the Douranees the same harsh policy which had been pursued by the Barukzye Sirdars. He had brought many of the principal chiefs to Caubul, and was now endeavouring to extract

their claws. His letters written at this time exhibit his feelings towards the "blackguard Douranees."

"August 29.—The Douranee chiefs who have been in rebellion must be effectually humbled. And we must put it out of their power to attempt any further mischief. The Barukzye

other Ghilzye chiefs were in his safe keeping at Caubul, seemingly contented with their lot. As the month advanced, our prospects seemed to brighten. The Envoy continued to write that everything was "*couleur de rose*."*

Sirdars took the only effectual method of keeping these gentry quiet. We must never dream of conciliation. Terror is the only instrument which they respect.

"August 31.—These fellows must be crushed, and our only refuge from constant intrigue and disaffection is to show the hopelessness of both. In short, we must treat the Douranees as the Barukzye Sirdars treated them. The difference in our favour is, that we have better means of humiliating them.

"September 2.—All that I would urge is, that you impose very stringent conditions on these blackguard Douranees, so as to take the conceit thoroughly out of them, and to prevent the possibility of their being again impertinent. I have at length prevailed upon his Majesty to exercise a little wholesome severity towards the Moocsids of that class in Caubul. They were, night and day, meditating mischief, and striving to create disunion between us and the Shah. His Majesty, yesterday morning, required them to execute a

promising that they would be loyal and obedient for the future. This, methinks, was no very severe obligation; yet they one and all (six of them) point-blank refused. I then recommended his Majesty to give them five days' law to prepare and proceed with their families to Peshawur. This, if his Majesty continues firm, will very shortly bring them to their senses, and we shall enjoy much *aram* for a long time to come.

"September 4.—The noses of the Khawaneen have now, I am happy to say, been brought to the grindstone. Seeing that his Majesty was firmly resolved on their expatriation, they are now as humble as they were before insolent.

"September 5.—I am glad that no executions have taken place—not because I think they are not required, but because experience teaches me that detraction is at work with regard to all our proceedings—that malevolence will magnify an act of retributive justice into a cold-blooded murder; and, moreover, that we can expect no support from our own government. When tranquillity is restored, let a list be made of the chief offenders selected for punishment, with a statement of the offences of each, and then let his Majesty determine the penalty."—[*MS. Correspondence.*]

* See Macnaghten's letters *passim*: "September 5.—Everything has a favorable aspect for us; and Tezeen and Dehrawut having been subdued, a more solid foundation will have been laid for the tranquillity of this country than ever was dreamt of.

"September 15.—Our prospects in this country are brightening in every direction, and the Dehrawut expedition once successfully terminated, we shall have no other enemy to oppose us. Thè *Gooroo* and the other Ghilzye chiefs are safely located in the city of Caubul, and are quite *Koosh*.

"September 17.—I have told Lord A. that affairs have assumed a much more cheerful appearance since the date of my letter of July 22. Whether or not we shall have another brigade in lieu of the returning troops, will depend upon circumstances. My own opinion is, that we could easily do without them, unless operations beyond our present boundary are contemplated.

"September 20.—We are all quiet here; and I am in great hopes that we shall be able to come to an arrangement with Nijrow—the only thorn in our side. The Zoornut revenue has been realised with unex-

It is true that Pottinger was not sending in very favorable reports from the Kohistan and the Nijrow country, which were now his new sphere of action;* but of these troubles Macnaghten made light account. He believed that Pottinger was an alarmist. It is true that an expedition was going out to Zao, to reduce some turbulent robber tribes; but this necessity he attributed to the indiscretion of one of our own officers, who had needlessly attacked the place with insufficient means, and been compelled to beat a retreat.† The expedition, too, as Macnaghten said, was only a "little go;" and immensely popular with our officers, who were zealously volunteering for the sport.‡

amped facility, and everything is *couleur de rose*."—[*MS. Correspondence*.]

* After leaving Herat, Pottinger had gone down to Calcutta in 1840; but had returned to Afghanistan, and been appointed political agent in the Kohistan, in May, 1841.

† "September 22.—Hay's foolish attack upon the fort of Zao has entailed upon us the necessity of sending out a force in that direction. It will consist of two infantry regiments, with a *quantum sufficit* of artillery and cavalry. I have long been impressed with the necessity of sending an expedition against the Khowajahs and other robber tribes; but I had hoped to postpone it till next season. After the punishment inflicted upon them by Outram in 1839, they were for some time quiet; but now their audacity has become again conspicuous. They have incessantly fired into our camps, and plundered and murdered our defenceless camp-followers. Were we not to raze to the ground the fort that resisted the Shah's authority, and harboured the robber chiefs, we might expect to be hourly insulted, and to have our dawks with Candahar cut off during the winter."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. MS. Correspondence*.]

‡ "September 25.—Our little go against Zao is very popular. Half the officers here are volunteering for the fray. I hope the thing will be done cleverly and completely. Nijrow will then be the only thorn in our side. Pottinger has a project of subjugating these wild mountaineers, and of seizing or ejecting the Moofsids, who have taken refuge in their territory, by employing the Ooloos, and at the same time marching through it the troops returning to Hindostan and Jellalabad. This would certainly form an overwhelming force—eighteen guns of sorts, two regiments of cavalry, and six regiments of infantry. I have submitted the plan to the General, but I do not know what he will say to it. Were the rebel Kohistanee chiefs expelled from Nijrow, I should beg of government to send us no more troops."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. MS. Correspondence*.] Brigadier Roberts says, that when the Kohistanee expedition of 1840, which nearly had such a disastrous termination, was first projected, it was looked upon as a mere party of pleasure, and that ladies were talking of joining it. It does not appear whether they had any notion of participating in the pleasures of the popular expedition to Zao.

The popular expedition into the Zoormut country was completely successful. Macgregor, who accompanied the force in the character of political adviser, found the rebellious forts evacuated. He had only, therefore, to destroy them. The results, however, of the movement were not wholly pacificatory. Pottinger said that the feeling which it engendered in the Kohistan was extremely unfavorable to us. It confirmed, he said, in the minds of the malcontents, "the belief so industriously spread of our difficulties, whilst rumours from Herat and Candahar of invasion, renewed rebellion, and disturbances, were again spread abroad."*

During the early part of October the Kohistanees remained perfectly quiet. But every hour, said Pottinger, "brought rumours of the formation of an extensive conspiracy." These he at first doubted; but he reported them to the Envoy, and asked for information on the subject. The answer was, that neither Macnaghten nor Burnes could perceive any grounds for suspicion.

In the mean while, the Eastern Ghilzyes were breaking out into revolt.† They had the same cause of complaint as the Kohistanees. The money-bag, which had kept them in order, was beginning to fail. It is a moot point whether revenge or avarice is the stronger feeling in the Afghan breast. Both were now arrayed against us. The bayonet and the money-bag were failing to do their work.

The expenses of the occupation of Afghanistan had long been telling fearfully upon the revenues of India. Lord Auckland had been slow to look the intolerable evil of this exhausting drain fairly in the face. But the other members of the Supreme Council had been less

* Major Pottinger's *Budeabad Report*.

† Pottinger was of opinion that the Ghilzyes, the Kohistanees, and

the Douranees, were all leagued together; and that the compact between them was formed about the end of September.

slow to address themselves fully to the subject; and the home authorities had written out urgent letters regarding the miserable results of the continued occupation of a country that yielded nothing but strife. Looking at the matter in the most favorable point of view, it was found that the support of Shah Soojah cost the treasury of India at least a million and a quarter a year. The Court of Directors and the Board of Control, or that fusion of the two authorities known as the Secret Committee, had taken, before the close of 1840, a correct and statesman-like view of the subject, and had written out that they could see nothing in the continued support of Shah Soojah, who, it was plain, had no hold upon the affections of the people, to compensate for this alarming exhaustion of the financial resources of India, and the necessary injuries inflicted upon the people by such a fearful waste of the revenues of the country. And, in the spring of 1841, it had become a matter for serious consideration whether the policy, which had proved so utterly disastrous, should not be openly and boldly abandoned. The question came before the Supreme Council at the end of March.* Either by some negli-

* *Sir Jasper Nicolls' MS. Journal*—some passages of which may be cited in illustration of this part of the inner history of the war :

" *March 12.*—My letter of the 10th of November will be found difficult to parry after all ; and I regret to say that the immense expenditure cannot long be borne. A million a year will not cover our charges ; and Lord Auckland's answers to the last week's applications prove to me that he begins to feel it.

" *March 21.*—We are called upon to make early and large remittances to the Upper Provinces ; and fifty lakhs have been ordered (their requisitions increased in a week to eighty lakhs). Thirty lakhs went last week to Bombay, and twenty-nine are now at

Ferozepore, waiting for transmission. This will never do. Even if we had a firmer hold of Afghanistan than we have, we should be compelled to give it up, for a drain of a million a year will infallibly swamp us. Even a good share of the Punjab would not cover this great charge. Lord Auckland is not inclined to look this in the face, and acknowledge by a loan the unfortunate result of our successes.

" *March 26.*—Lord Auckland sent home a long minute regarding Herat. . . . He means to preserve our footing in Afghanistan. Mr. Bird and Mr. Prinsep approve of this, though the latter roundly and justly asserts that it cannot be done under a crore and a quarter (a million and a quarter) annually ; and that no present mode

gence, or by some juggle, the opinions of the military members of Council were not obtained; but Lord Auckland and the civilians decided in favour of the continued occupation of the country, though it was certain that it could only be done at the cost of a million and a quarter a year. But money had already become painfully scarce. It was necessary to recruit the exhausted treasury. There was no other mode of accomplishing this than by opening a new loan. Such a public declaration of the embarrassed condition of the government was distressing to Lord Auckland; but nothing else was to be done. So at the end of March he drew up an advertisement for a five per cent. loan.* It is a remarkable instance of that kind of monomaniac blindness which besets some men, under peculiar conditions of existence, that when Macnaghten learnt that a new loan had been opened, he asked, "What can this be for?" and spoke of the war—in *China*! †

of extending our receipts to that extent, is open to us. Lord Auckland wrote a note to ask our opinions on the subject. Mr. Maddock never circulated the note. Sir W. Case-ment and myself were therefore silent. We are clearly in a great scrape. That country drains us of a million a year and more; and we only in truth are certain of the allegiance of the people within range of our guns and cavalry. . . . One part of Lord Auckland's paper only will be received for a time. He states our resources to be only a crore less than when we crossed the Indus. The Accountant-General says, that on the 30th of April we may expect the reduction to amount to three crores and three-quarters. I told Prinsep that he had been very complaisant not to point this out."

* *Sir Jasper Nicolls' MS. Journal*, March 29.—"At last the advertisement for a loan is prepared, and will shortly appear. Though Lord

Auckland did not advert to a deficiency of three-and-a-half crores in his paper on Afghanistan, he now acts upon it. This will force on the Court a decision as to our maintaining our position in that quarter at such a price, for they will assuredly never pay even the charges of the Shah.

"May 12.—Before I close this book (volume of the Journal), I would record my opinion that the whole thing will break down. We cannot afford the heavy, yet increasing drain upon us. Nine thousand troops between Quettah and Kurachee; at least 16,000 of our army and the Shah's to the north of Quettah. The King's expenses to bear in part—twenty-eight political officers to pay, besides Macnaghten—Dost Mahomed's allowance—barracks—a fort or two to build—loss by exchange, &c., &c. To me it is alarming. The silver does not return, and it is becoming scarce."

† "You will have seen that Govern-

But the call was responded to but slowly.* Money did not come in freely, though it was going out with a freedom perhaps unexampled in the history of Indian finance; and the Court of Directors still continued to write out, as Sir Jasper Nicolls and others in India were declaring, that it had become necessary either to withdraw altogether from Afghanistan, or to fall back upon the alternative of a large augmentation of the army. As the year advanced, too, other influences were at work to move the Indian Government to consider more and more intently the subject of the continued drain upon the resources of India. Great Britain was on the eve of a change of ministry, which would settle in Downing-street a party of Conservative statesmen, and send to Calcutta one of their number, known to be hostile to the whole policy of the expedition across the Indus; and Macnaghten was already beginning to tremble at the thought of what he called prospectively an "unparalleled atrocity"—but what many would have regarded as an act of wisdom and justice—the withdrawal of the British army from Afghanistan. How strongly Macnaghten felt upon this subject, and in what manner he argued against it, may be gathered from a letter which, on the 25th of September, he addressed to the Governor of Agra. Still he continued to report that the whole country was quiet, and insisted that the Shah's force, aided by one European

ment is opening a new five per cent. loan. What can this be for? I apprehend it augurs ill for the Chinese settlement, and that we shall have that work to do over again."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson: April 20, 1841. MS. Correspondence.*]

* *Sir Jasper Nicolls' MS. Journal, May 20.*—"Here is a very untoward account of the Afghan finances. It will never do to have India drained of a million and a quarter annually for a rocky frontier, requiring about

25,000 men and expensive establishments to hold it even by threats as at present. The specie, too, is drawn away not to return. Little comes from China. How is it to end? Money is not rapidly subscribed to the loan, because it gains twelve to eighteen per cent. for short periods elsewhere—amongst natives, twenty-four per cent. or more. Unless a large accession of Punjaub territory comes in to connect us safely with Caubul, and to aid our very heavy expenses, we must withdraw."

regiment at Caubul, and another at Candahar, would be sufficient to keep the whole country in order :

. Rumours are rife as to the intentions of the Tories towards this country, when they get into power. If they deprive the Shah altogether of our support, I have no hesitation in saying (and that is saying a great deal) they will commit an unparalleled political atrocity. The consequences would be frightful. The act would not only involve a positive breach of treaty, but it would be a cheat of the first magnitude. Had we left Shah Soojah alone, after seating him on the throne, the case would have been different. He would have adopted the Afghan method of securing his sovereignty. But we insisted upon his acting according to European notions of policy, and we have left all his enemies intact—powerless, only because we are here. In short, we should leave him with all the odium of having called in the aid of foreign infidel auxiliaries, and with none of those safeguards which he himself would have provided for his security. How could we expect him, under such circumstances, to maintain his power ? I know that he would not attempt it. He would pack up his all, and return to his asylum in India, the moment our resolution was imparted to him. We have effectually prevented his forming a party for himself. In a few years hence, when the present generation of turbulent intriguers shall have been swept away, the task will be comparatively easy. As it is, the progress we have made towards pacifying, or rather subjugating (for neither the Douranees nor the Ghilzyes were ever before *subject* to a monarchy), is perfectly wonderful. The Douranee Kings kept these unruly tribes in good humour by leading them to foreign conquest. The Barukzye rulers kept them down by sharing their power with some, and sowing dissensions amongst others, by the most paltry and unjustifiable shifts and expedients, to which the Shah could not, if it were in his nature even, have recourse. Now the whole country is as quiet as one of our Indian chiefships, and more so—but the reaction would be tremendous if the weight of our power was suddenly taken off. There are gangs of robbers here and there which it would be desirable to extirpate; and I had intended to postpone this job till a more favorable opportunity; but you will see, from my official letters, that it has been forced upon me, by Captain Hay's proceedings, at an earlier period than I anticipated. We are well prepared, however, and

the coercion of these brigands will have an excellent effect all over the country. Dost Mahomed not only tolerated them, but went snacks in their spoils. After their dispersion shall have been effected, there will be literally nothing to do except the subjugation of Nijrow. Pottinger has a project for effecting this, without trouble or expense, by marching through their country the troops returning to Hindostan and Jellalabad. I have submitted this to the General; and should it be carried into effect, I shall beg of government to send us no more troops, for they would only be an encumbrance. A million and a quarter per annum is certainly an awful outlay; but if the items were examined, you would find that a full moiety of this is to be laid to the account of Mr. Bell's proceedings in Upper Sindh, where they have had an army, *cui bono*? larger than the Army of the Indus. All this profligate expenditure will now cease, and, barring Herat, I am quite certain that the Shah's force would be ample, with the addition of one European regiment at Caubul and another at Candahar, to keep the entire country in order. I am, too, making great reduction in our political expenditure; and I feel certain that, in a very short time, an outlay of thirty lakhs per annum will cover, and more than cover, all our expenses. The process of macadamization (which, notwithstanding the present lull, I cannot but consider as near at hand) would reduce our outlay to nothing. I should not be surprised to see Colonel Stoddart and Arthur Conolly walking in any fine morning. I am glad you approved of the wig I conveyed to the latter. I am satisfied it adverted from him worse consequences. His enthusiasm, which I found it impossible to repress, is continually leading him into scrapes.* . . .

Such, at the close of September, were Macnaghten's views of our continued occupation of Aghanistan. But, before this, the letters of the Court of Directors, the orders of the Supreme Government, and the portentous shadow of the coming Tory ministry, had roused Macnaghten to a sense of the great fact that it was necessary to do something to render less startlingly and offensively conspicuous the drain upon the resources of India, which was exhausting the country, and para-

* MS. Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.

lysing the energies of its rulers. So it was determined to carry into effect a system of economy, to be applied wherever it could be applied, to the expenditure of Afghanistan; and, as ordinarily happens, both in the concerns of public and of private life, the retrenchments which were first instituted were those which ought to have been last. Acting in accordance with the known wishes of government, Macnaghten began to retrench the stipends, or subsidies, paid to the chiefs. He knew how distasteful the measure would be; he was apprehensive of its results. But money was wanted, and he was compelled to give it effect.*

The blow fell upon all the chiefs about the capital—upon the Ghilzyes, upon the Kohistanecs, upon the Caubulees, upon the Momunds, even upon the Kuzzilbashcs.† Peaceful remonstrance was in vain. So they held secret meetings, and entered into a confederacy to overawe the existing government, and to recover what they had lost. Foremost in this movement were the Eastern Ghilzyes. Affected by the general retrenchments, they had also particular grievances of their own.‡ They were the first, therefore, to throw off the mask. So they quitted Caubul—occupied the passes on the road to Jellalabad—plundered a valuable cafila—and

* The retrenchments, too, were to touch the Court. "I have suggested sundry retrenchments," he wrote to Rawlinson, "which, though necessary, will be most unpalatable to his Majesty and his myrmidons."

† "In carrying out the system of economy, the Kuzzilbashcs, Caubulees, Kohistanecs, Ghilzyes, and Momunds, were alike sufferers. Deputations were sent on their part to the Nizam-ood-Dowlah, to Sir William H. Macnaghten, and to the Shah, to seek redress; but their complaints being unattended to, they all united heartily to resist and upset, if possible, a measure so obnoxious to them. Secret meetings were held,

oaths were taken to support each other, and a plan of operations was formed."—[*Report of Captain Macgregor. MS. Records.*]

‡ "The Ghilzyes, however, had another grievance—viz., that during the rule of Ameer Mahomed Khan (Dost Mahomed's brother), who had managed partially to subdue this wild tribe, and had effected a reduction in their pay of 13,000 rupees, this was restored to them in 1839, on the return of the Shah; but it was again reduced on the present occasion. Further, they were held responsible for thefts committed beyond their respective boundaries."—[*Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.*]

entirely cut off our communications with the provinces of Hindostan.

Upon this, Humza Khan, the governor of the Ghilzyes, was sent out to bring them back to their allegiance. "Humza Khan," wrote Macnaghten to Macgregor, on the 2nd of October, "who is at the bottom of the whole conspiracy, has been sent out by his Majesty to bring back the Ghilzye chiefs who have fled; but I have little hope of the success of his mission."* Humza Khan, whose own stipend was included in the general retrenchment, had been commissioned to carry the obnoxious measure into effect; and he had instigated the chiefs to resist it. He was now sent out to quell a disturbance of which he was himself the parent and the nurse.

These movements did not at first much alarm Macnaghten. He was intent upon his departure from Cabul; and he said that the outbreak had happened at a fortunate moment, as his own party and the troops proceeding to the provinces could take them *en route* to India.† But a few days afterwards he began to take a

* *MS. Records.* See the Duke of Wellington's Comments on this Subject in the Appendix.

† "October 3.—You will have heard ere now of my appointment to Bombay. I could wish that this most honourable distinction had been withheld a little longer, until I could have pronounced our relations in this country as being entirely satisfactory; but, thanks in a great measure to your zealous co-operation, I may even now say, that everything is rapidly verging to that happy consummation. No time is fixed for my departure. That will depend upon the instructions I receive from Lord Auckland. Should his Lordship direct me to deliver over my charge to Burnes, there is little or nothing, that I know of, to detain me, and I ought to be in Bombay by the

middle of December. I am suffering a little anxiety just now, as the Eastern Ghilzye chiefs have turned *Yaghee*, in consequence, I believe, of the reduction of their allowances, and their being required to sign an *ittizain* against robberies. We have sent to bring them back to their allegiance, and I think there will be no difficulty about them, unless the root of the *Fusad* lies deeper, and they are, as some assert, in league with Mahomed Akbar. In that case, it will be necessary to undertake operations on a larger scale against Nijrow and Tugao, in the latter of which districts the Moofsids have taken refuge. They are very kind in breaking out just at the moment most opportune for our purposes. The troops will take them *en route* to India. To-

more serious view of the matter; and he urged Macgregor to return with all despatch to Caubul, that he might accompany the expedition he was about to send out against the rebels. But at the same time he wrote to Rawlinson, that he did not apprehend any open opposition; and he never seemed to doubt that the insurrectionary movement would promptly be put down.*

Sale's brigade, which was returning to the provinces, was, it has been seen, to stifle the insurrection *en route* to Jellalabad. Macnaghten, however, thought of strengthening the force, with a view to the operations against the Ghilzyes, and he wrote to Captain Trevor, who, pending the arrival of Macgregor, was holding the enemy in negotiation, that he believed the General would send out "two eight-inch mortars, two iron nine-pounder guns, Abbott's battery, the 5th Cavalry, the Sappers and Miners, and the 13th Queen's, with the 35th and 37th Native Infantry."† But he continued to talk of the "impudence of the rascals," and expressed his belief that, the insurrection put down, the country would be quieter than ever.‡ On the 9th of October, Colonel Monteith marched

morrow I hope our expedition will reach the refractory forts of Zao, and teach them a most salutary lesson."—[Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. *MS. Correspondence*.]

* "Oct. 7.—The Eastern Ghilzyes are kicking up a row about some deductions which have been made from their pay. The rascals have completely succeeded in cutting off our communications for the time being, which is very provoking to me at this juncture; but they will be well trounced for their pains. I have succeeded in sowing dissensions among them, which will, *Inshallah!* make some of them *wark hula*. A force will move out against them to-morrow or next day, but I do not apprehend any open opposition. . . .

"I hope to be off from this in eight

or ten days. I shall leave a paper of instructions with Burnes. The country, I trust, will be left in a state of tranquillity, with the exception of the Ghilzyes, between this and Jellalabad, and I hope to settle their hash on the road down, if not before."—[*Ibid.*]

† The 37th Native Infantry and the 5th Cavalry were not a part of the relieved brigade.

‡ "October 11.—One down, t'other come on, is the principle with these vagabonds; and lucky for us that it is so. No sooner have we put down one rebellion than another starts up. The Eastern Ghilzyes are now in an uproar, and our communications with Jellalabad are completely cut off. This state of things—*Inshallah!*—will not last long. Only imagine the impu-

from Caubul, with the 35th Native Infantry, a squadron of the 5th Cavalry, two guns of Abbott's battery under Dawes, and Broadfoot's Sappers and Miners. That night his camp was attacked at Bootkhak—the first march on the Jellalabad road. On the 10th, therefore, Sale received orders to march at once with the 13th, and on the following day he started to clear the passes. On the 12th, Sale entered the defile of Khoord-Caubul. The enemy occupied the heights in considerable force, and, in their own peculiar style of warfare, opened a galling fire upon our advancing column. Sale was wounded at the first onset, and Dennie took command of the troops. He spoke with admiration of "the fearless manner in which the men of the 13th, chiefly young soldiers, ascended heights nearly perpendicular under the sharp fire of the insurgents." And added, that the Sepoys of the 35th, who had fought under him at Bamecan, "rivalled and equalled them in steadiness, activity, and intrepidity."* The pass was cleared, and then the 13th retraced its steps to Boot-

dence of the rascals in having taken up a position, with four or five hundred men, in the Khoord-Caubul Pass, not fifteen miles from the capital. I hope they will be driven out of that either to-day or to-morrow; but the pass is an ugly one to force. They fired last night upon the 35th Regiment, and succeeded in killing or wounding twenty-four Sepoys. Tugao has been the nursery, and Humza Khan the dry-nurse of this insurrection. Tugao will be visited, I hope, in a day or two, and I have solicited his Majesty to put Humza in durance vile, and to confiscate all his property. This *émule* of ours is particularly provoking just as I am about to quit Afghanistan. I had hoped to leave the country in perfect tranquillity; and I still think that it will be quieter

than ever it was, after the insurrection is put down. It is particularly provoking that Macgregor is absent with a large portion of our force at this juncture. My accounts from Burn at Gundamuck are very satisfactory. The efforts of the rebels to raise the tribes are as unavailing as incessant. His Majesty's name has been freely used, as usual; no wonder—it is a tower of strength; but never was a more foul calumny uttered than that which would associate his Majesty with our enemies." — [Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. *MS. Correspondence*.

* Captain Younghusband, of the 35th, Captain Wade, the Brigade-Major of the force, and Lieutenants Mein and Oakes, of the 16th, were wounded in this affair.

khak, whilst Monteith, with the 35th and the other details, was left encamped in the Koord-Caubul valley.

In the mean while, Macgregor had returned from the Zoomut country. Macnaghten had known him long, and had abundant confidence in the man.* He had for some time been employed in political superintendence of the country between Caubul and Jellalabad, and by an admirable union of the vigorous and the conciliatory in his treatment of the tribes, had won both their respect and their affection. The Envoy now believed that Macgregor would soon restore the country to tranquillity, and was impatient until his return. Macgregor reached Caubul on the 11th of October, and soon started for Monteith's camp. Macnaghten, who believed that the outbreak was local and accidental, looked with eagerness to the result. He took little heed of what was going on in the Kohistan. He did not think that the Douranee Khans, whose "noses he had brought to the grindstone," were plotting their emancipation from the thralldom of the infidels.

But Pottinger, in the Kohistan, plainly saw the storm that was brewing—plainly saw the dangers and difficulties by which he was surrounded. As the month of October advanced, the attitude of the Kohistanees and the Nijrowees was more and more threatening. Meer Musjedee had been, some time before, described in the newspapers paragraphs of the day as stalking about the country, and sowing broad-cast the seeds of rebellion. The measures of the King's government had long before made these very people, who had risen up

* Macgregor, an officer of the Bengal Artillery, had been one of Lord Auckland's *aides-de-camp*, and had accompanied, as has been shown, the British Mission, despatched under Macnaghten, to negotiate the Tripartite treaty. He subsequently accompanied the Envoy to Caubul, and was always in his confidence.

against the tyranny of Dost Mahomed, ripe for revolt against the more consummate tyranny of the Shah. And now, in the middle of October, Pottinger saw that the state of things was fast approaching a crisis; so he demanded hostages from the Kohistanee chiefs. To this the Envoy reluctantly consented. "And," wrote Pottinger, in his official account of these transactions, "I only succeeded in procuring them by the end of the month, when everything betokened a speedy rupture with the Nijrowees." By this time, indeed, Meer Musjedee had openly raised the standard of revolt, and the people were clustering around it.

Macnaghten thought very lightly of these movements in the Kohistan. Nothing disturbed his faith in the general tranquillity of the country, and the popularity of the double government. He greatly desired the settlement of the Ghilzye question, for there was something palpable and undeniable in such a movement; and he was anxious to set his face towards the provinces of Hindostan. Eagerly, therefore, he looked for intelligence from Macgregor. He had begun, however, to doubt whether so troublesome a business could be settled by peaceful negotiation. "We must thrash the rascals, I fear, after all," he wrote to Macgregor, on the 17th; "but I don't think that the troops will be under weigh until the 20th. Is not this provoking? Abbott has made some excuse about his guns being injured. Pray write a circumstantial plan of the best means of surrounding and preventing the escape of the villains."* Abbott was not a man to make excuses of any kind, but the Envoy was becoming impatient. On the 18th, he wrote again: "It has been determined that the Sappers and miners, the mountain train, and two companies of the

* *Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor: October 17, 1841. MS. Records.*

37th Native Infantry, march out to join you to-morrow morning. They will make one march to Khoord-Caubul. The next day I hope you will be joined by the 13th, the 37th, and Abbott's battery. I hope you will arrange the plan of attack before Sale arrives.* But although Macnaghten was eager to "thrash the rascals," certain prudential considerations suggested to him that it would only be expedient to punish them as much as could "conveniently" be done. It would not be convenient, at such a time, to exasperate the insurgents too much, and drive them to block up the passes, and plunder everything that came in their way.†

In the mean while, Monteith, in his isolated post in the Khoord-Caubul valley, was exposed, if not to some danger, to considerable inconvenience, for the enemy made a night attack upon their camp, aided by the treachery of the Afghan horsemen,‡ who admitted them within their lines. One of our officers, Lieutenant Jenkins, and several Sepoys, were killed; and a number of camels carried off by the enemy. Monteith reported the treachery of his Afghan friends, and the Envoy resented his just suspicions.§ But he was now to be relieved.

* *Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor: October 18, 1841. MS. Records.*

† "With regard to Tezeen, I wish to leave matters very much to your discretion. But the season is far advanced, and if the rebels are very humble, I would not be too hard unto them. But Gool Mahomed can have nothing but war, and the defences of Khoda Buxsh's fort must be demolished; he can only have the reduced Mowajib, and the plundered property must be restored. Hostages must be furnished by both; the more we can conveniently punish these rascals, the better; but I should be sorry to hear of their bolting, probably to renew their depredations; but you

must judge for the best on the spot—a thousand things may happen which I cannot foresee."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor: October 19, 1841. MS. Records.*]

‡ The Shah's Hazir-bash. There was no doubt of their treachery, and next day Macgregor sent them back to Caubul.

§ "Monteith's official letter is so full of the treachery of the whole party, I believe the General will send it back to him for reconsideration. If he had clear proof against the party, he should have summarily executed the whole of them. If his accusation rests on suspicion alone, he has acted most unwisely and most unjustly. It is a very convenient and a very com-

Sale appeared with two more infantry regiments, with more guns, and more sabres; and after a brief halt, for want of carriage, which much tried the patience of the Envoy,* the whole swept on to Tezeen. Here the force halted for some days, and Macgregor busied himself in negotiations with the enemy. Macnaghten had instructed him to accommodate matters, if it could be done without any loss of honour; and Macgregor was candid enough to acknowledge that the insurrection of the Ghilzyes had been brought about by "harsh and unjust" measures of our own; so he opened a communication with the rebel chiefs; and, being known to most of them, consented to a personal interview. So Macgregor met

mon process to ascribe to our Afghan allies every calamity that befalls us. But why were the camels committed to such custody? Their loss is very provoking in every way, but I trust they will soon be recovered. Sale will be with you to-morrow, and you will advance upon Tezeen the next day."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor: Oct. 19, 1841.*]

* "October 21.—Our troops have halted to-day at Khoord-Caubul for want of camels!!! I had hoped, ere evening, to have announced to you the capture or dispersion of the Tezzen rebels; but of this there is no hope till to-morrow. Our people in this quarter have a happy knack of *bitching* matters. However, let that pass. All's well that ends well. In the mean time, it is very satisfactory to think that, notwithstanding we had rebellion at our very doors, not a single tribe has joined the rebels. The interruption of our communications is very provoking, but the road will soon be opened. . . . I do not think I can possibly get away from this before the 1st proximo. The storm will speedily subside; but there will be a heaving of the billows for some time, and I should like to see everything right and tight before I quit the helm.

Burnes is naturally in an agony of suspense about the succession to me. I think, and hope, he will get it. I know no one so fit for the office. *Quæta non movere* is his motto; and, now that tranquillity is restored (or will be in a day or two), all that is required will be to preserve it. I hardly know how to answer your separate note of the 15th, received this morning; but I can assure you I feel exceedingly proud at having gained your good opinion. We have had a very trying time of it since we were first officially associated, and it was no wonder that you, occupying as you did the post of danger, should have occasionally yielded to despondency, especially when under the influence of severe illness. But in all other respects you have given me entire satisfaction, and I feel that we are mainly indebted to your temper, judgment, and energy, for overcoming the numerous difficulties by which we have been surrounded. Wherever I go, I shall carry with me a pleasing recollection of your friendship, and of the laborious and successful operations which have fallen to our joint lot."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. MS. Correspondence.*]

the chiefs. There was a long and animated discussion.* They demanded that their salaries should be restored to their former footing; and to this Macgregor consented. Other demands were made and resisted altogether, or conceded to with some qualification; and it was supposed that the Ghilzye affair had been "patched up after a fashion;" not, perhaps, without some loss of dignity, but with as much vigour as was convenient at the time. At all events, Macnaghten was able to report that the affair was settled.†

* "I met them according to their own desire, being accompanied by Captain James Paton (who wished to examine more closely the fort in case we might find it necessary to proceed against it), my Persian writer, and an orderly Sowar, for I thought, by throwing myself completely on their mercy, I should be more likely to secure their protection. The chiefs demanded that their salaries should be placed on their former footing—that they should not be held responsible for thefts committed beyond their respective boundaries, and that Gool Mahomed Khan should be reinstated as their chief. To the two first-mentioned demands I agreed, but to the last I objected, for by displacing Burkutt Khan, who had been appointed to the chiefship (on Gool Mahomed having joined in the rebellion), the honour of the government would have been compromised. This led to a long and warm discussion; but the chiefs, finding that on this point I was firm, yielded to me, and I returned to camp. On the 25th they sent in their agents to remain with me, and to make arrangements for re-establishing the Thannahs and Dāk Chokies, &c. The next day we left Tezeen for Gundamuck. Although I felt a little doubtful in my own mind as to the good faith of the chiefs, Gool Mahomed and Mahomed Shah Khan (they not appearing to be satisfied), in the promised fulfilment of their engagements, still I saw no good reason why they

should not act up to them if they consulted their own interests; and any infraction of the treaty might be resented at Gundamuck, when the chiefs would be far more tangible than in their present position, from which to extricate the troops, in itself formed an object of much solicitude to me." —[*Captain Macgregor's Report. MS. Records.*]

† "October 26.—I am glad that affairs have been settled; and I conclude that you have got such assurances, whether by hostages of a sufficient description or otherwise, to satisfy you that there is no intention of breaking out again when they catch us off our guard. I have just got a note from Pottinger, who evidently writes in great trepidation. He says the Nijrowees are coming down to attack him. But I have no doubt that the storm will blow over, when they hear of the settlement of the Ghilzye question."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor. MS. Correspondence.*]

"October 26.—I have not much time to spare to-day, but I cannot resist writing, to tell you that our Ghilzye differences are brought to a settlement. I cannot say a most satisfactory one. But we are well out of the scrape, as we are positively unable to compete with these mountaineers and their jezails. . . . If we expect to keep the people of this country in order, we must get two or three regiments of moun-

He thought the terms granted to the rebels were too favorable; and the King was dissatisfied with them;* but the Envoy replied that it was the treachery of the Shah's own people that had paralysed the efforts of our negotiators. Indeed, it was known that people about the Court had left Caubul for the purpose of joining in a night attack upon our troops. Still Macnaghten could

tainers from different tribes, and arm them with the jezail of the country. In the mean time, we are lucky in having patched up this quarrel. The worst part of the transaction is our having conceded to Khoda Buksh, one of the chief rebels, his mowajib, on the old footing, without deductions. The best part of it is, our having persuaded the confederates to throw overboard Gool Mahomed, one of their number, and to recognise Burkutt Khan as the chief of Jubbar Kheil. They were very averse to this, and stood out against it for a long time. Pottinger writes as if he were about to be invaded by the Nijrowees, but I imagine there is little ground for this alarm, and that at all events the fellows will sneak into their holes again when they hear that the Ghilzyes are quiet. If all is quiet, I intend being off on the 1st proximo.

" . . . There is no use in my saying anything about Akrum, as I presume he is past praying for. But if Futteh Khan put to death his renowned father, Meer Aulum, the Prince need have little hesitation about putting to death the son."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Major Rawlinson. MS. Correspondence.*]

* "October 27.—I do not entertain the smallest doubt of the policy of your proceedings, or of the wisdom of your granting such favorable terms to the rebels. His Majesty sent for me this morning before breakfast. He was evidently much dissatisfied; but I proved to him that, if the terms granted were less stringent than they should have been, the fault lay with his own traitorous servants, who con-

spired with the enemy and paralysed our troops. He promised to seize Mahomed Ali Meer Khan this day, and to make an example of him if his treason were proved. I am almost satisfied of the fellow's guilt, and think that Gool Mahomed's letter must have been intended for our perusal. His Majesty particularly dwelt upon the description of hostages. He said they were justens, &c. I explained to his Majesty that these people were not sent as hostages, but merely to assist our troops, and to be the medium of a friendly communication, until the chiefs acquired sufficient confidence to send their relatives. I wish you could prevail upon them to do this. You might say that, until this was done, his Majesty never could feel assured of their sincerity, and that consequently the door will always be open to future misunderstanding. I understand that four companies of the 54th, with the cavalry and artillery, march to-morrow morning as an escort to the sick, &c.

"I shall probably make a start on Monday morning, the 1st proximo, that is, if everything is quiet; but matters have still a threatening appearance in the direction of the Kohistan, and I dread to open the letters I receive from Pottinger, but I sincerely trust that the accommodation of our differences with the Ghilzyes will have the effect of keeping quiet the Moofsids in that quarter. I am a good deal bothered, as you may imagine, just now. Now that my departure is so near, every fellow is having at me."—[*Sir W. H. Macnaghten to Captain Macgregor. MS. Correspondence.*]

not believe that there was any wide-spread feeling of disaffection among the chiefs and the people of Caubul; nor when Pottinger sent in gloomy reports from the Kohistan, could he bring himself to think that they were anything but the creations of a too excitable brain.*

Macgregor soon learnt the value of his treaty. From

* "Oct. 27.—The Eastern Ghilzye affair having been patched up after a fashion, our friends have condescended to open the road, and I have been very busy all day writing letters. . . I take my departure, barring any more rows, on the 1st proximo; but I shall retain charge of my office until I reach Ferozepore. I am trembling lest there should be a row in the Kohistan, which Pottinger constantly threatens, though, I believe, without sufficient reason. The settlement of the Ghilzye question will, I dare say, keep the Moosids quiet in that quarter. Nothing, however, that has occurred in this country has annoyed me so much as the mode in which this settlement has been effected; but I have not yet got the particulars, and I have the fullest reliance on the judgment and discretion of Macgregor, by whom the negotiation was conducted.

"Oct. 29.—I am glad to find, from your letter of the 26th, which reached me this morning, that the execution of that incorrigible malefactor Akrum was conducted so quietly. It is as well, perhaps, that the Prince spared the ears of Yar Mahomed [Akrum's nephew], as these mutilations are very shocking; but does he not deserve perpetual imprisonment? Our affairs in this quarter are gradually settling down into tranquillity; but we have an ugly matter upon our hands. The Shah's Meer Akhor, who with eighty horse was in Monteith's camp on the night of the Shubbkoom, is said to have dealt foully with us, and I fear, if his guilt is proved, that I shall have a great deal of difficulty in procuring his execution. His Majesty is naturally averse to believe that one of his

dependents could have behaved so treacherously, as he rightly conjectures that a large portion of the disgrace of such rascality will be reflected on himself. But I shall endeavour to persuade him that he will incur a still larger portion of it if he hesitate about inflicting the most signal punishment on the guilty individual. I tremble, indeed, to think of the consequences which must ensue if his Majesty fails in his duty in this respect. But his natural good sense and devotion to us will, I hope, come to his rescue. Macgregor's letters (his last was dated the day before yesterday, from Kutta Sung) lead me to hope that the few robbers, by whom alone the road is now infested, will speedily disperse. . . . I trust I have at last got Pottinger into a pacific mood, though I tremble when I open any of his letters, lest I should find that he has got to loggerheads with some of his neighbours. In the present excited state of men's minds, a row in any quarter would be widely infectious, and we are not in a condition to stand much baiting. You may rely on hearing from me when anything of interest takes place. The rebels had very favorable terms given them by Macgregor. He acted wisely in acting leniently; and it is rather fortunate that they had a good grievance. They had been required to give an ittzaim for thefts by Ghilzyes whenever committed, and this was *jubbur* of the most intolerable kind. But the rascally Governor, Humz Khan, who excited the chiefs to rebellion, took care that I should know nothing of what was going on."—[*MS. Correspondence of Sir W. H. Macnaghten.*]

Tezeen to Gundamuck the agents⁴ of the Ghilzye chiefs were in our camp; but there was some hard fighting for the brigade. The enemy mustered in force, and attacked our column; and the old excuse was made, that it was owing to no faithlessness on the part of the chiefs, but to their inability to control the tribes. It was a terrible country for a baggage-encumbered force to toil through, in the face of an active enemy. Jugdulluck was gained with little opposition; but, on the next march, it was seen that the heights were bristling with armed men, and a heavy fire was poured in from all the salient points, on which, with the instincts of the mountaineer, they had posted themselves, with such terrible effect. Sale threw out his flanking parties, and the light troops, skirmishing well up the hill-sides, dislodged the enemy, whilst a party under Captain Wilkinson, pushing through the defile, found that the main outlet had not been guarded, and that the passage was clear. The march was resumed; but the enemy were not yet weary of the contest. Reappearing in great numbers, they fell furiously upon our rear-guard, and, for a time, our people, thus suddenly assailed, were in a state of terrible disorder. The energetic efforts of our officers brought back our men to a sense of their duty, and restored the confidence, which, for a little space, had forsaken the young soldiers. Broadfoot, Backhouse, and Fenwick, are said to have rallied and reanimated them. But the loss that fell upon them was heavy—more than a hundred men were killed and wounded; and among them was Captain Wyndham, of the 35th, who fell like a brave soldier in the unequal fight.*

* "The only officer killed, Wyndham, a captain of the 35th Native Infantry, fell nobly. Himself lame from a hurt, he had dismounted at that moment of peril to save the life of a wounded soldier, by bearing him from the combat on his charger. When the rear-guard broke before

Sale halted at Gundamuck. Macnaghten heard of the loss sustained between Jugdulluck and Soorkhab, but wrote to Macgregor, on the 1st of October, that he "hoped the business last reported was the expiring effort of the rebels;" and that the party would have dispersed, and thannahs been re-established.* To Major Rawlinson he wrote on the same day, and congratulated him on the tranquil appearance that affairs had assumed in the direction of Candahar. It was now the very day that he had fixed upon for his departure from Caubul; and still he did not doubt for a moment that his emancipation was close at hand.

the onset of the Ghilzyes, Wyndham, swords and knives of an unsparing
 unable to keep pace with the pur- foe."—[*Calcutta Review.*]
 sued, turned, fought, and, over- * *MS. Correspondence.*
 powered by numbers, fell beneath the

A P P E N D I X.

[Vol. I., Page 70.]

*Preliminary Treaty with Persia, concluded by Sir Harford Jones,
on the 12th of March, 1809.*

In the Name of Him who is ever necessary, who is all-sufficient,
who is everlasting, and who is the only Protector.

In these times, distinguished by felicity, the excellent Ambassador, Sir Harford Jones, Baronet, Member of the Honourable Imperial Ottoman Order of the Crescent, has arrived at the Royal City of Teheran, in quality of ambassador from his Majesty the King of England (titles), bearing his Majesty's credential letter, and charged with full powers munited with the great seal of England, empowering him to strengthen the friendship and consolidate the strict union subsisting between the high states of England and Persia. His Majesty the King of Persia (titles), therefore, by a special firmaun delivered to the said ambassador, has appointed the most excellent and noble Lords Meczra Mahomed Sheffeh, qualified with the title of Moatumed-ed-Dowlah, his first vizier, and Hajee Mahomed Hoossein Khan, qualified with the title of Ameen-ed-Dowlah, one of the ministers of record, to be his plenipotentiaries to confer and discuss with the aforesaid ambassador of his Britannic Majesty, all matters and affairs touching the formation and consolidation of friendship, alliance, and strict union between the two high states, and to arrange and finally conclude the same for the benefit and advantage of both kingdoms. In consequence whereof, after divers meetings and discussions, the aforesaid plenipotentiaries have resolved that the following articles are for the benefit and advantage of both the high states, and are hereafter to be accordingly for ever observed.

Art. I. That as some time will be required to arrange and

form a definitive treaty of alliance and friendship between the two high states, and as the circumstances of the world make it necessary for something to be done without loss of time, it is agreed these articles, which are to be regarded as preliminary, shall become a basis for establishing a sincere and everlasting definitive treaty of strict friendship and union; and it is agreed that the said definitive treaty, precisely expressing the wishes and obligations of each party, shall be signed and sealed by the said plenipotentiaries, and afterwards become binding on both the high contracting parties.

II. It is agreed that the preliminary articles, formed with the hand of truth and sincerity, shall not be changed or altered, but there shall arise from them a daily increase of friendship, which shall last for ever between the two most serene kings, their heirs, successors, their subjects, and their respective kingdoms, dominions, provinces, and countries.

III. His Majesty the King of Persia judges it necessary to declare that from the date of these preliminary articles, every treaty or agreement he may have made with any one of the powers of Europe becomes null and void, and that he will not permit any European force whatever to pass through Persia, either towards India, or towards the ports of that country.

IV. In case any European forces have invaded, or shall invade, the territories of his Majesty the King of Persia, his Britannic Majesty will afford to his Majesty the King of Persia, a force, or, in lieu of it, a subsidy, with warlike ammunition, such as guns, muskets, &c., and officers, to the amount that may be to the advantage of both parties, for the expulsion of the force so invading; and the number of these forces, or the amount of the subsidy, ammunition, &c., shall be hereafter regulated in the definitive treaty. In case his Majesty the King of England should make peace with such European power, his Britannic Majesty shall use his utmost endeavours to negotiate and procure a peace between his Persian Majesty and such power. But if (which God forbid) his Britannic Majesty's efforts for this purpose should fail of success, then the forces or subsidy, according to the amount mentioned in the definitive treaty, shall still continue in the service of the King of Persia as long as the said European forces shall remain in the territories of his Persian Majesty, or until peace is concluded between his Persian Majesty and the said

European power. And it is further agreed, that in case the dominions of his Britannic Majesty in India are attacked or invaded by the Afghans or any other power, his Majesty the King of Persia shall afford a force for the protection of the said dominions, according to the stipulations contained in the definitive treaty.

V. If a detachment of British troops has arrived from India in the Gulf of Persia, and, by the consent of his Persian Majesty, landed on the island of Karrak, or at any of the Persian ports, they shall not in any manner possess themselves of such places; and, from the date of these preliminary articles, the said detachment shall be at the disposal of his Majesty the King of Persia, except his Excellency the Governor-General of India judges such detachment necessary for the defence of India, in which case they shall be returned to India, and a subsidy, in lieu of the personal services of these troops, shall be paid to his Majesty the King of Persia, the amount of which shall be settled in the definitive treaty.

VI. But if the said troops remain, by the desire of his Majesty the King of Persia, either at Karrak, or any other port in the Gulf of Persia, they shall be treated by the governor there in the most friendly manner, and orders shall be given to all the governors of Farsistan, that whatever quantity of provisions, &c., may be necessary, shall, on being paid for, be furnished to the said troops at the fair prices of the day.

VII. In case war takes place between his Persian Majesty and the Afghans, his Majesty the King of Great Britain shall not take any part therein, unless it be at the desire of both parties, to afford his mediation for peace.

VIII. It is acknowledged the intent and meaning of these preliminary articles are defensive. And it is likewise agreed, that as long as these preliminary articles remain in force, his Majesty the King of Persia shall not enter into any engagements inimical to his Britannic Majesty, or pregnant with injury or disadvantage to the British territories in India.

This treaty is concluded by both parties in the hope of its being everlasting, and that it may be productive of the most beautiful fruits of friendship between the two most serene kings.

In witness whereof we, the said plenipotentiaries, have hereunto set our hands and seals in the royal city of Teheran, this twelfth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand

eight hundred and nine, answering to the twenty-fifth of Mohurrum el Haram, in the year of the Hegira one thousand two hundred and twenty-four.

(L.S.)	HARFORD JONES.
(L.S.)	MAHOMED SHEFFEEH.
(L.S.)	MAHOMED HOOSSEIN.

[Vol. I., page 83.]

Treaty with Runjeet Singh, the Rajah of Lahore, dated 25th April, 1809.

Whereas certain differences which had arisen between the British Government and the Rajah of Lahore have been happily and amicably adjusted; and both parties being anxious to maintain the relations of perfect amity and concord, the following articles of treaty, which shall be binding on the heirs and successors of the two parties, have been concluded by Rajah Runjeet Singh on his own part, and by the agency of Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, Esquire, on the part of the British Government.

Art. I. Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British Government and the state of Lahore. The latter shall be considered, with respect to the former, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers; and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Rajah to the northward of the River Sutlej.

II. The Rajah will never maintain, in the territory occupied by him and his dependents on the left bank of the River Sutlej, more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of that territory, nor commit, or suffer, any encroachment on the possessions or rights of the chiefs in its vicinity.

III. In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles, or of a departure from the rules of friendship, on the part of either state, this treaty shall be considered null and void.

IV. This treaty, consisting of four articles, having been settled and concluded at Umritser, on the 25th day of April, 1809, Mr. Charles Theophilus Metcalfe has delivered to the Rajah of Lahore a copy of the same in English and Persian, under his seal and

signature; and the said Rajah has delivered another copy of the same under his seal and signature; and Mr. Charles Theophilus Metcalfe engages to procure, within the space of two months, a copy of the same, duly ratified by the Right Honourable the Governor-General in Council, on the receipt of which by the Rajah the present treaty shall be deemed complete and binding on both parties, and the copy of it now delivered to the Rajah shall be restored.

[Vol. I., page 89.]

Treaty with the King of Caubul, dated 17th June, 1809.

Whereas, in consequence of the confederacy with the state of Persia, projected by the French for the purpose of invading the dominions of his Majesty the King of the Douranees, and, ultimately, those of the British Government in India, the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone was despatched to the Court of his Majesty, in quality of envoy plenipotentiary, on the part of the Right Honourable Lord Minto, Governor-General, exercising the supreme authority over all affairs, civil, political, and military, in the British possessions in the East Indies, for the purpose of concerting with his Majesty's ministers the means of mutual defence against the expected invasion of the French and Persians; and whereas the said ambassador, having had the honour of being presented to his Majesty, and of explaining the friendly and beneficial object of his mission, his Majesty, sensible of the advantages of alliance and co-operation between the two states for the purpose above described, directed his ministers to confer with the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, and, consulting the welfare of both states, to conclude a friendly alliance; and certain articles of treaty having accordingly been agreed to between his Majesty's ministers and the British ambassador, and confirmed by the royal signet, a copy of the treaty so framed has been transmitted by the ambassador for the ratification of the Governor-General, who, consenting to the stipulations therein contained, without variation, a copy of these articles, as hereunder written; is now returned, duly ratified by the seal and signature of the Governor-General, and the signatures of the members of the British Government in India. And the obligations upon

both Governments, both now and for ever, shall be exclusively regulated and determined by the tenor of those articles, which are as follow:

ART. I. As the French and Persians have entered into a confederacy against the state of Caubul, if they should wish to pass through the King's dominions, the servants of the heavenly throne shall prevent their passage, and, exerting themselves to the extent of their power in making war on them and repelling them, shall not permit them to cross into British India.

II. If the French and Persians, in pursuance of their confederacy, should advance towards the King of Caubul's country in a hostile manner, the British state, endeavouring heartily to repel them, shall hold themselves liable to afford the expenses necessary for the above-mentioned service, to the extent of their ability. While the confederacy between the French and Persians continues in force, these articles shall be in force, and be acted on by both parties.

III. Friendship and union shall continue for ever between these two states. The veil of separation shall be lifted up from between them, and they shall in no manner interfere in each other's countries; and the King of Caubul shall permit no individual of the French to enter his territories.

The faithful servants of both states having agreed to this treaty, the conditions of confirmation and ratification have been performed, and this document has been sealed and signed by the Right Honourable the Governor-General, and the Honourable the Members of the Supreme British Government in India, this 17th day of June, 1809, answering to the 1224 of the Hegira.

[Vol., I., page 93.]

Treaty with the Ameers of Sindh, dated 22nd August, 1809.

ART. I. There shall be eternal friendship between the British Government and that of Sindh—namely, Meer Gholam Alee, Meer Kurreem Alee, and Meer Murad Alee.

II. Enmity shall never appear between the two states.

III. The mutual despatch of the vakeels of both Governments—namely, the British Government and Sindhian Government—shall always continue.

IV. The Government of Sindh will not allow the establishment of the tribe of the French in Sindh.

Written on the 10th of the month of Rujeeb-ool-Moorujub, in the year of the Hegira 1224, corresponding with the 22nd of August, 1809.

[Vol. I., page 139.]

Definitive Treaty with Persia, concluded at Teheran, by Messrs. Morier and Ellis, on the 25th November, 1814.

Praise be to God, the all-perfect and all-sufficient.

These happy leaves are a nosegay plucked from the thornless garden of Concord, and tied by the hands of the plenipotentiaries of the two great states in the form of a definitive treaty, in which the articles of friendship and amity are blended.

Previously to this period, the high in station, Sir Harford Jones, Baronet, Envoy Extraordinary from the English Government, came to this Court to form an amicable alliance, and, in conjunction with the plenipotentiaries of Persia, their Excellencies (titles) Meerza Mahomed Sheffeeh, and Hajee Mahomed Hussein Khan, concluded a preliminary treaty, the particulars of which were to be detailed and arranged in a definitive treaty; and the above-mentioned treaty, according to its articles, was ratified by the British Government.

Afterwards, when his Excellency Sir Gore Ouseley, Ambassador Extraordinary from his Britannic Majesty, arrived at this exalted and illustrious Court, for the purpose of completing the relations of amity between the two states, and was invested with full powers by his own Government to arrange all the important affairs of friendship, the ministers of this victorious state, with the advice and approbation of the above-mentioned ambassador, concluded a definitive treaty, consisting of fixed articles and stipulations.

That treaty having been submitted to the British Government, certain changes in its articles and provisions, consistent with friendship, appeared necessary; and Henry Ellis, Esquire, was accordingly despatched to this Court, in charge of a letter explanatory of the above-mentioned alterations. Therefore, their Excellencies Meerza Mahomed Sheffeeh, Prime Minister, Meerza

Bozoork, Caimacan (titles), and Mcerza Abdul Wahab, Principal Secretary of State (titles), were duly appointed, and invested with full powers to negotiate with the plenipotentiaries of his Britannic Majesty, James Morier, Esquire, recently appointed minister at this Court, and the above-mentioned Henry Ellis, Esquire. These plenipotentiaries having consulted on the terms most advisable for this alliance, have comprised them in eleven articles. What relates to commerce, trade, and other affairs, will be drawn up and concluded in a separate commercial treaty.

ART. I. The Persian Government judge it incumbent on them, after the conclusion of this definitive treaty, to declare all alliances contracted with European nations in a state of hostility with Great Britain null and void, and hold themselves bound not to allow any European army to enter the Persian territory, nor to proceed towards India, nor to any of the ports of that country; and also engage not to allow any individuals of such European nations, entertaining a design of invading India, or being at enmity with Great Britain, whatever, to enter Persia. Should any European powers wish to invade India by the road of Kharazm, Tartaristan, Bokhara, Samarcand, or other routes, his Persian Majesty engages to induce the kings and governors of those countries to oppose such invasion, as much as is in his power, either by the fear of his arms, or by conciliatory measures.

II. It is agreed that these articles, formed with the hand of truth and sincerity, shall not be changed or altered; but there shall arise from them a daily increase of friendship, which shall last for ever, between the two most serene kings, their heirs, successors, their subjects, and their respective kingdoms, dominions, provinces, and countries. And his Britannic Majesty further engages not to interfere in any dispute which may hereafter arise between the princes, noblemen, and great chiefs of Persia; and if one of the contending parties should even offer a province of Persia, with view of obtaining assistance, the English Government shall not agree to such a proposal, nor, by adopting it, possess themselves of such part of Persia.

III. The purpose of this treaty is strictly defensive, and the object is that from their mutual assistance both states should derive stability and strength; and this treaty has only been concluded for the purpose of repelling the aggressions of enemies; and the purport of the word aggression in this treaty is an attack

upon the territories of another state. The limits of the territory of the two states of Russia and Persia shall be determined according to the admission of Great Britain, Persia, and Russia.

IV. It having been agreed by an article in the preliminary treaty concluded between the high contracting parties, that in case of any European nation invading Persia, should the Persian Government require the assistance of the English, the Governor-General of India, on the part of Great Britain, shall comply with the wish of the Persian Government, by sending from India the force required, with officers, ammunition, and warlike stores; or, in lieu thereof, the English Government shall pay an annual subsidy, the amount of which shall be regulated in a definitive treaty to be concluded between the high contracting parties; it is hereby provided that the amount of the said subsidy shall be two hundred thousand (200,000) tomauns annually. It is further agreed that the said subsidy shall not be paid in case the war with such European nation shall have been produced by an aggression on the part of Persia; and since the payment of the above subsidy will be made solely for the purpose of raising and disciplining an army, it is agreed that the English minister shall be satisfied of its being duly applied to the purpose for which it is assigned.

V. Should the Persian Government wish to introduce European discipline among their troops, they are at liberty to employ European officers for that purpose, provided the said officers do not belong to nations in a state of war or enmity with Great Britain.

VI. Should any European power be engaged in war with Persia when at peace with England, his Britannic Majesty engages to use his best endeavours to bring Persia and such European power to a friendly understanding. If, however, his Majesty's cordial interference should fail of success, England shall still, if required, in conformity with the stipulations in the preceding articles, send a force from India, or, in lieu thereof, pay an annual subsidy of two hundred thousand (200,000) tomauns for the support of a Persian army, so long as a war in the supposed case shall continue, and until Persia shall make peace with such nation.

VII. Since it is the custom of Persia to pay the troops six months in advance, the English minister at that court shall do all

in his power to pay the subsidy in as early instalments as may be convenient.

VIII. Should the Afghans be at war with the British nation, his Persian Majesty engages to send an army against them in such manner and of such force as may be concerted with the English Government. The expenses of such an army shall be defrayed by the British Government, in such manner as may be agreed upon at the period of its being required.

IX. If war should be declared between the Afghans and Persians, the English Government shall not interfere with either party, unless their mediation to effect a peace shall be solicited by both parties.

X. Should any Persian subject of distinction, showing signs of hostility and rebellion, take refuge in the British dominions, the English Government shall, on intimation from the Persian Government, turn him out of their country, or, if he refuses to leave it, shall seize and send him to Persia.

Previously to the arrival of such fugitive in the English territory, should the governor of the district to which he may direct his flight receive intelligence of the wishes of the Persian Government respecting him, he shall refuse him admission. After such prohibition, should such person persist in his resolution, the said governor shall cause him to be seized and sent to Persia; it being understood that the aforesaid obligations are reciprocal between the contracting parties.

XI. Should his Persian Majesty require assistance from the English Government in the Persian Gulf, they shall, if convenient and practicable, assist him with ships of war and troops. The expenses of such expedition shall be accounted for and defrayed by the Persian Government, and the above ships shall anchor in such ports as shall be pointed out by the Persian Government, and not enter other harbours without permission, except from absolute necessity.

The articles are thus auspiciously concluded:

A definitive treaty between the two states having formerly been prepared, consisting of twelve articles, and certain changes, not inconsistent with friendship, having appeared necessary, we the plenipotentiaries of the two states, comprising the said treaty in eleven articles, have hereunto set our hands and seals, in the royal city of Teheran, this twenty-fifth day of November, in the year of

our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, corresponding with the twelfth Zealhajeh, in the year of the Hegira one thousand two hundred and twenty-nine.

(L.S.)	JAMES MORIER.
(L.S.)	HENRY ELLIS.
(L.S.)	MAHOMED SHEFFEEH.
(L.S.)	ABDUL WAHAB.
(L.S.)	ISAH (MEERZA BOZOORK).

[Vol. I., page 149.]

Bonds given by Abbas Meerza, Prince Royal of Persia, and by the Shah, cancelling the Subsidy Articles of the Treaty of 25th November, 1814.

Bond granted by Abbas Meerza, Prince Royal of Persia, to Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonald, British Envoy.

Be it known to Colonel Macdonald, British envoy at our Court, that we, the heir apparent to the Persian throne, in virtue of the full powers vested in us by the Shah, in all matters touching the foreign relations of this kingdom, do hereby pledge our solemn word and promise, that if the British Government will assist us with the sum of two hundred thousand tomanauns (200,000), towards the liquidation of the indemnity, due by us to Russia, we will expunge, and hereafter consider as annulled, the IIIrd and IVth articles of the definitive treaty, between the two states, concluded by Mr. Ellis, and obtain the royal sanction to the same.

This paper bears the seal of his Royal Highness Abbas Meerza, and that of his Persian Majesty's Minister the Kaim-Mukam.

Dated in the month of Shaban, or March, 1828.

Ruckum of his Royal Highness the Heir Apparent, in ratification of the Annulment of the IIIrd and IVth Articles of the Treaty with England.

Relative to the articles III. and IV. of the propitious treaty between England and Persia, which was concluded by Mr. Ellis, in the month Zeekaud, A.H. 1229, agreeably to the engagements entered into with your Excellency, that, in consequence of the sum of 200,000 tomanauns, the currency of the country, presented as an aid to Persia, in consideration of the losses she has sustained in the war with Russia, we, the heir apparent, vested with full powers in all matters connected with the politics of this nation,

have agreed that the said two articles shall be expunged, and have delivered a bond to your Excellency, which is now in your hands.

In the month of Zikeyla, A.H. 1243, on our going to wait upon his Majesty at Teheran, in consistence with the note addressed to your Excellency by Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, we were appointed sole agent in this matter by his Majesty, with unlimited authority; therefore, as the Government of England, through the medium of Colonel Macdonald, have afforded us the assistance of 200,000 tomauns, we, the representative of his Majesty, have, on this day, the 14th of the month Suffer, and the 24th of the Christian month August, annulled the two obnoxious articles of our propitious treaty. The envoy, considering this document as a ratification on the subject of the two articles, will know that it is liable to no further comment from the ministers of his Majesty's Court.

Sealed by

Month of Suffer, A.H. 1244. H.R.H. ABBAS MEERZA.

*Firmaun from his Majesty the Shah to Colonel Macdonald,
British Envoy in Persia.*

A.C.

Let it be known to Colonel Macdonald, the English envoy, exalted by our munificence, that, our noble son having represented to us his having recently come to an arrangement relative to the two articles of the treaty with England, we have ordered that what has been executed by our son, touching this transaction, in conformity with the firmaun of full powers granted to him by us, be confirmed by our royal ratification and consent; and we duly appreciate the exertions of your Excellency during the last year, which have obtained you the goodwill of the Shah.

Regarding the crore of tomauns required for the redemption of Khoee, agreeably to what has been laid before us, H.R.H. Abbas Meerza has directed the payment of 400,000 tomauns by Mohamed Meerza; and we have besides instructed the remaining 100,000 tomauns to be delivered to Meerza Abul Hassan Khan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, for the purpose of being transmitted to you.

Your Excellency will, therefore, conceiving this firmaun as your security, become responsible for the payment of the above sum,

which will be afterwards paid to you by the lord of exalted rank,
Meerza Abul Hassan Khan. Also make known to us all your
wishes.

Sealed by

HIS MAJESTY FUTTEH ALI SHAH.

[Vol. I., page 587.]

MINUTE OF SIR JASPER NICOLLS.

10th November, 1840.

The manner in which the affairs of Afghanistan have pressed upon the military resources of India are well known—upon Bengal they have borne so heavily, added to a prospect of a war with Nepaul, that the annual and most necessary relief of the native troops has been in a great degree suspended.

Whilst we are very liberal in our care and payment of our army, it would be most imprudent to risk the loss of their attachment to the Company's government by denying them the periodical return to their homes, which they so much covet, and which is so necessary for their domestic comfort and respectability. As long as an expectation of being able to withdraw a portion of our troops from Caubul this year was entertained, or could be reasonably hoped for, I abstained from offering any remarks on the subject of relief; but instead of withdrawing regiments from Afghanistan and Sindh, we are now sending into those countries between six and eight thousand men to confirm, in some place to re-establish, *our* supremacy. I use these words, because it is now clear to me that Shah Soojah, even with a force commanded by European officers, most inconveniently spared to instruct the troops, and to lead them on, will never be the independent King of Afghanistan. The semi-barbarous tribes of that country, who have been freed from any well-established rule for centuries, will not submit to any settled form of government under a native of that land. They have shown us that they do not stand in much awe even of our power and resources.

From the advanced position which we have taken up, we cannot, perhaps, consistently withdraw; in good faith we cannot displace Shah Soojah; we have, therefore, to continue to rule, as we now do, in his name, which entails the expense of his establishments, personal, civil, and military, upon us, without any

prospect of reimbursement. It is not, however, on financial grounds that I am anxious to lay my opinions before the Governor-General in Council—it is to recommend that the future may be considered, and that the Honourable Court may be solicited to authorise such addition to the Indian army as our present position seems to demand. Our occupation of Afghanistan draws a considerable portion of our troops entirely out of India, and the communication with them is always tedious—at times impracticable. We have at present five European regiments beyond the Indus, or proceeding thither, and I cannot, under existing circumstances, estimate our permanent European force at less than three regiments, two in the north and one in Sindh.

Our native troops have conducted themselves exceedingly well in Afghanistan; but it is to them a foreign country: the climate is most uncongenial; to the Hindoos most injurious. We ought not, I think, to suffer any native corps to remain more than two years there. There are at this time nineteen regiments of native infantry beyond the Indus, or moving thither by various routes: of these it is possible, but not certain, that two may return to Bengal and four to Bombay before the end of March, leaving thirteen far beyond our frontier. I have little doubt that the imposing bodies of troops now proceeding to Sukkur and Caubul will place the Shah's government on a firmer footing than it has ever yet been. Allowing, however, the most perfect success to all our operations in the south, and fully expecting lasting benefit from the important advantages gained by Brigadier Dennie and Sir Robert Sale, I cannot think that less than ten regiments of native infantry can be considered sufficient to restrain the ferocity of the northern tribes, to curb the independence of the Beloochees, and to crush the propensity of both to eject us, by intrigue and a harassing war of details. The Shah's troops are not included. Taking, then, three European and ten native regiments as the force by which we may expect to hold the country, maintaining our communications of diplomacy: two and six would be the Bengal proportion—one and four the proportion of Bombay.

The augmentation ordered last year by the Honourable Court, when the three new European regiments are fit for service, will give the number desired; indeed, they were raised to meet the probable consequences of our advance beyond the Indus; but if other regiments melt away, as her Majesty's 13th Light Infantry

and the 1st European Regiment have done, we shall feel the drain a very heavy one.

Madras is reduced to four Queen's regiments of infantry, one of which is at Moulmein, and therefore, at some seasons of the year, out of reach. We have drawn from that Presidency the largest number that it can safely spare, and no other source is open to us on this side of the Cape from which to strengthen the European portion of this army.

Recent events assure us that the Sikhs will not long quietly admit our establishment in Afghanistan: surrounded as they will be; humbled by the superiority which we claim when we require a passage for our troops and convoys through their territory; and elated by many years of successful encroachment on their neighbours, they will venture upon a trial of their strength.

Indian history proves that a sense of inferiority has not prevented adjoining states from forcing the British Government into hostilities:—Tippoo in 1799, Nepaul, Ava, the Mahrattas in 1817, afford instances of this. The Sikhs will follow their examples, I have no doubt, whenever they have, or think they have, a favourable opportunity. Nepaul will urge them on continually to the contest, and will probably afford the opportunity alluded to.

We ought to be at all times strong enough to enter upon war simultaneously with these two states; and not entirely to forget that Ava still smarts under the loss of its territory. When compelled to enter into hostilities at the same time with the Sikhs and Nepaulese, it may be so arranged that we, at first, adopt a defensive line of proceeding towards one of them. If we can draw upon Madras for cavalry, there will be the means, in that arm, of meeting both contingencies. We ought, however, to have more than seven European regiments to give weight and effect to operations carried on in countries so far apart, that mutual support is impracticable. If I am not mistaken, the Marquis Wellesley desired that the establishment of her Majesty's troops should not be less than 25,000 men. Since his Lordship left India, great additions have been made to our territory, and we have been brought into contact with warlike tribes, inhabiting countries badly suited to the constitution of our native soldiery. When I state that we have at this time *ten and a half European regiments beyond the limits known in Lord Wellesley's time*, it

may be granted that I cannot be very wrong in urging that the established number of her Majesty's troops to be employed in India shall be raised to 25,000 men. Bombay is undoubtedly overpressed at this moment. There are nine of her native infantry regiments in Sindh, or moving thither, of which four must soon return to be recruited and restored. To enable Bombay to do this, and to garrison Aden and Kharack, Madras has been resorted to ; indeed, the other two Presidencies would now be crippled, were it not for the great assistance given by Fort St. George. To carry on happily through all we have undertaken, through contests which may be expected ; to check the germs of disloyalty at home, should such arise ; to give our native corps short periods of foreign service, and to carry on the reliefs ; I recommend government seriously to consider whether it is not most necessary that an early augmentation of the army should take place.

I advise an *early* increase under certain knowledge of the difficulty of raising good men, and of the time required to train them, and to establish confidence in their officers. Ten regiments appear to be sufficient to give us security in Afghanistan and Sindh. They should be effective corps. We have not only neighbours to overawe, but treacherous subjects to control, and doubtful friends to intimidate. Five for Bengal, three for Madras, and two for Bombay, seem to be the due proportions, the addition to Madras being given on the acknowledged condition that she must be ever ready to take some of the southern stations of Bengal and Bombay, as at present. I very much prefer augmentation by regiments to numerical increase by companies, though well aware of the additional expense, and that for some years (five at least) we shall not have our regiments well officered.

Again, I assure his Lordship and my colleagues, that my sole object in drawing their attention to this subject is my anxiety to provide for the future. We well know the difficulties experienced from the monsoons and seasons, in drawing troops together ; we must be convinced that we have force and stability in every quarter, and that our power is felt and acknowledged. When we require an instance of the difficulties alluded to, let us remember that Brigadier Shelton's column will not reach Jellalabad until four months after it was urgently applied for, and that it cannot proceed to Caubul till the roads are free from snow. Afghanistan not being well suited to cavalry operations, and the

difficult passes compelling us to narrow the artillery branch of our equipment, I do not see that we are likely to meet any impediment in increasing these portions of our force when it may be necessary.

I have carefully avoided all reference to Herat, or to any employment of troops beyond the Hindoc-Koosh. If hostilities should be undertaken in either, the case I have attempted to establish will even more urgently require consideration and forethought.

J. NICOLLS.

[Vol. I., page 588.]

MINUTE OF SIR JASPER NICOLLS, 19TH AUGUST, 1841.

When the opinions of the members of government were last given on the affairs of Afghanistan, I did not offer mine, because there was very little time for doing so before the despatch of the mail—and further, because I had partly recorded my sentiments on the 10th of November, 1840, when advising an increase of the army, to meet the demand our new conquest called for. The surrender of Dost Mahomed, a few days before, was given as a proof that no such increase was required, and the serious increase of expense was another ground for setting aside the recommendation. I was well disposed to yield assent to both; but I observe by the activity with which our reinforcements have since been sent, that there is a conviction at home that our European troops should be kept on a high establishment. I cordially join in the Governor-General's opinion now recorded, that we should not advance upon Herat, if it can possibly be avoided. We experience anxiety and difficulty in keeping Shah Soojah upon his throne, without extending his kingdom at the risk of our own power and security. The military base on which our positions in Afghanistan are now supported, is very objectionable on account of distance; difficulty of communication; foreign interposition. The seasons control and cramp every movement, and the proceedings and policy of the Sikhs cannot be anticipated. To advance beyond the Helmund would greatly increase our difficulties. A corps at Herat could not be easily reinforced, and, as a bridle upon Persia, Russia, and the Turcomans, it should

contain, at least, the power of protracted self-defence. We should be called upon, probably at no distant time, to take the field in its support. To do this safely, we should be strong on our whole line from Caubul to Khelat, for Afghan intrigue would undoubtedly be actively employed to disturb the district from which the troops were drawn. Yar Mahomed is certainly a very insidious enemy, but if ejected from Herat he would not be less so. The Douranees and Ghylzes are stimulated by him no doubt, and perhaps other tribes may be so; they do not however receive either money or aid from him, and they will tire of advice which only leads to their discomfiture.

Although Dost Mahomed is now residing amongst us, I do not perceive that the Shah's government is much more at ease than it was at this time last year; though our military force beyond the Indus has been much increased. The hope of leaving the Shah's dominions to his own force and government seems more distant than it then was.

My former proposal was met by an assertion (a very just one) that the heavy drain upon the finances would not admit an increase of establishment. I was not then aware of the full extent of that drain—it is now rated so high as to create a deficit of a million and a quarter annually, and I think we should not venture to send a second army beyond the Indus, to destroy the resources of India; for such a consequence may be apprehended from such a heavy annual exportation of the necessary funds. Again, when our jealous and intriguing neighbours observe our forces spreading to the east and west, so far beyond our former limits, and learn that our finances are decreasing annually, will they not be tempted to encourage each other to regain what we have wrested from them, and to unite the turbulent spirits within our provinces to rebellion.

I offer these opinions with hesitation and regret—but I lost the opportunity of stating them some months since, and am fearful that similar silence at this time might be misconstrued.

J. NICOLLS.

[Vol. I., page 619.]

COPY OF A MEMORANDUM BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, ON
SIR W. MACNAGHTEN'S LETTER OF OCTOBER 26, 1841.

January 29th, 1842. At night.

It is impossible to read the letter from Mr. Macnaghten to the Secretary to the Government in India, without being sensible of the precarious and dangerous position of our affairs in Central Asia.

Mr. Macnaghten complains of reports against the King Shah Soojah Khan and his government, as libels.

Of these we can know nothing; but I am convinced that no complaints or libels can be so strong as the facts stated by Mr. Macnaghten in this letter.

It appears that when Mr. Macnaghten heard of the first symptoms and first acts of this rebellion, he prevailed upon the king to send a message to the rebels, inviting them to return to their allegiance.

The selection of the person sent is curious—Humza Khan, the Governor of Caubul. His mission failed, of course, says Mr. Macnaghten, because Humza Khan was the chief instigator of the rebellion!

We know in this country something of the customs of those countries—of the meaning of some of the native expressions in this letter. It appears that there are four thanahs, or posts, between Caubul and Gundamuck. A thanah is either a permanent or a temporary post, to guard a road or district of importance. We have seen who the person was selected to induce the rebels to submit; let us now see who were the persons appointed to take charge of these thanahs or posts in the disturbed country—those named in the subsequent part of the despatch as the very men who were the leaders in the rebellion, in the attack, and destruction, and murder, of the East India Company's officers and troops!

No libels can state facts against the Afghan Government stronger than these.

But Mr. Macnaghten has discovered that the Company's troops are not sufficiently active personally, nor are they sufficiently well armed for the warfare in Afghanistan. Very pos-

sibly an Afghan will run over his native hills faster than an Englishman or a Hindoo. But we have carried on war in hill countries, as well in Hindostan and the Deccan as in the Spanish Peninsula; and I never heard that our troops were not equal, as well in personal activity as by their arms, to contend with and overcome any natives of hills whatever. Mr. Macnaghten ought to have learnt by this time that hill countries are not conquered, and their inhabitants kept in subjection, solely by running up the hills and firing at long distances. The whole of a hill country of which it is necessary to keep possession, particularly for the communications of the army, should be occupied by sufficient bodies of troops, well supplied, and capable of maintaining themselves; and not only not a Ghilzye or insurgent should be able to run up and down hills, but not a cat or a goat, except under the fire of those occupying the hills. This is the mode of carrying on the war, and not by hiring Afghans with long matchlocks to protect and defend the communications of the British army.

Shah Soojah Khan may have in his service any troops that he and Mr. Macnaghten please.

But if the troops in the service of the East India Company are not able, armed and equipped as they are, to perform the service required of them in Central Asia, I protest against their being left in Afghanistan. It will not do to raise, pay, and discipline matchlock-men, in order to protect the British troops and their communications, discovered by Mr. Macnaghten to be no longer able to protect themselves.

WELLINGTON.

Recd. on 7. 6. 76

C. P. No. 5735

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END OF VOL. I.

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